THE OTHER SAS

Revealing the WWII unit lost to secrecy

BLACK PRINCE OF FLORENCE

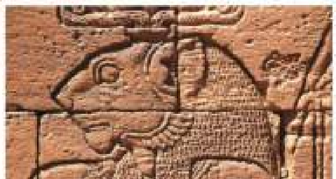
ALL ABOUT HISTORY

SALEM

How fear, fanaticism and vengeance fuelled the brutal witch trials

ANCIENT ROYAL SCANDALS

Nine throne-threatening tales you need to know



RIVALS OF EGYPT

Why the pharaohs feared the Kingdom of Kush

NURSE PIONEER

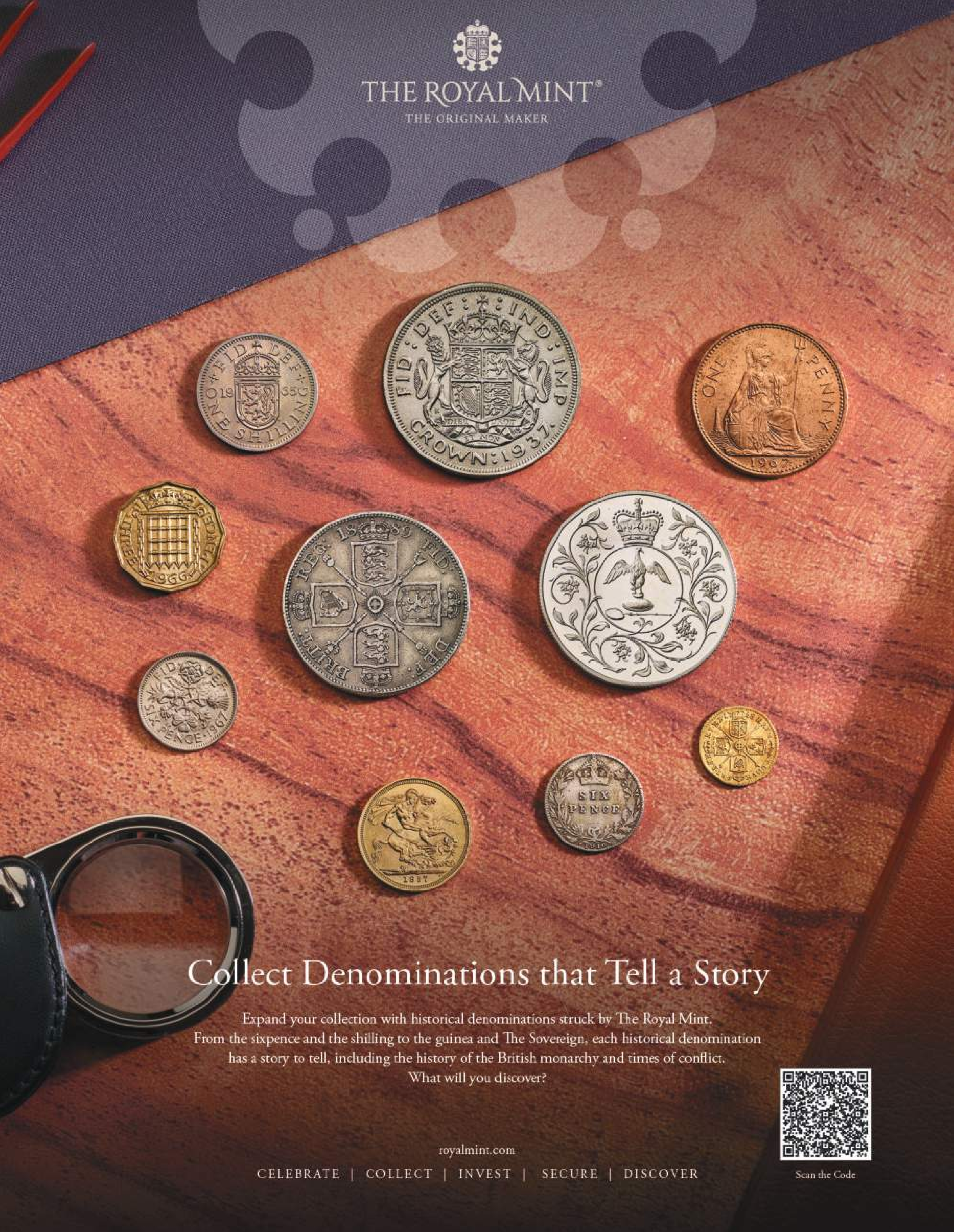
Discover the remarkable life of Mary Seacole

HAT ABOUT
AIDS
WHAT ABOUT
AIDS

PANDEMIC & PREJUDICE

Inside the AIDS crisis and the fight for justice

FUTURE
ISSUE 135



THE ROYAL MINT®
THE ORIGINAL MAKER

Collect Denominations that Tell a Story

Expand your collection with historical denominations struck by The Royal Mint.
From the sixpence and the shilling to the guinea and The Sovereign, each historical denomination has a story to tell, including the history of the British monarchy and times of conflict.
What will you discover?

royalmint.com

CELEBRATE | COLLECT | INVEST | SECURE | DISCOVER

Scan the Code

SCAN TO GET OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

© Getty Images

A scene from the 1954 production of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, based on the Salem trials

Welcome

As a reader of this magazine, you likely know this better than most that history isn't all about facts and dates; it's also a study of human behaviour. This is one of the reasons why I have always found the field so interesting. Whether I'm looking for something familiar and relatable in the people of the past or trying to understand the vast differences between us, there's always something to learn. And, of course, the most extreme examples of this can often be particularly illuminating. Our cover feature topic of the Salem witch trials is a fantastic case of this. On the surface, a fear of witches and demons leading to wrongful convictions and executions feels very distant. However, a story of how misinformation, demagoguery and prejudice can be combined to create a destructive social movement feels all too familiar. We welcome professor Marion Gibson to illuminate this dark story by digging into its social, political and psychological roots. I'm also delighted to have Catherine Fletcher join us to discuss Alessandro de' Medici, the Black duke who ruled Renaissance Florence for a short time. Helen Rappaport can also be found in this issue telling us about the remarkable life of Mary Seacole. Plus, we have features on ancient royal scandals, the AIDS crisis, and some WWII SAS history too. I hope you enjoy the issue.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

Be part of history

historyanswers.co.uk
Share your views and opinions online

Facebook
/AllAboutHistory

Twitter
@AboutHistoryMag

ALL ABOUT HISTORY
Future Publishing Limited
Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA

Editorial
Editor **Jonathan Gordon**
jonathan.gordon@futurenet.com
Art Editor **Kym Winters**
Features Editor **Callum McKelvie**
Staff Writer **Emily Staniforth**
Production Editor **Rachel Terzian**
Editor in Chief **Tim Williamson**
Senior Art Editor **Duncan Crook**

Contributors
Martyn Conterio, Catherine Curzon, Catherine Fletcher, Marion Gibson, Katharine Marsh, Nick Soldinger, Jackson van Uden, David Williamson

Cover images
Kevin McGivern, Getty Images, Gavin Mortimer

Photography and illustration
Kevin McGivern, Adrian Mann,
Alamy, Getty Images, Shutterstock, Thinkstock, Chinese Fans: The Untold Story, Gavin Mortimer
All copyrights and trademarks are recognised and respected.

Advertising
Media packs are available on request
Advertising Sales Director **Lara Jaggon**
lara.jaggon@futurenet.com
+44 (0)7515 961911
Account Manager **Jagdeep Maan**
jagdeep.maan@futurenet.com
+44 (0)1225 687353

International Licensing
All About History is available for licensing and syndication. To find out more contact us at **licensing@futurenet.com** or view our available content at **www.futurecontenthub.com**
Head of Print Licensing **Rachel Shaw**

Subscriptions
Enquiries **help@magazinesdirect.com**
Order line & enquiries **+44 (0) 330 333 1113**
Online orders & enquiries **www.magazinesdirect.com**
Consumer Revenues Directors **Sharon Todd**

Disruption remains within UK and International delivery networks. Please allow up to 7 days before contacting us about a late delivery to **help@magazinesdirect.com**

Circulation
Head of Newstrade **Ben Oakden**

Production
Head of Production **Mark Constance**
Senior Production Manager **Matt Eglinton**
Senior Ad Production Manager **Jo Crosby**
Digital Editions Controller **Jason Hudson**
Production Manager **Nola Cokely**

Management
SVP Consumer **Kevin Addley**
Commercial Finance Director **Tom Swayne**
MD Sports, Knowledge, & Wellness **Dave Clutterbuck**
Head of Art & Design **Greg Whitaker**

Printed by Wyndeham Peterborough, Storey's Bar Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5YS

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU www.marketforce.co.uk

For enquiries, please email: mfcommunications@futurenet.com

ISSN 2052-5870

We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from responsibly managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. The paper in this magazine was sourced and produced from sustainable managed forests, conforming to strict environmental and socioeconomic standards. All contents © 2023 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used, stored, transmitted or reproduced in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any other changes or updates to them. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein.

If you submit material to us, you warrant that you own the material and/or have the necessary rights/permissions to supply the material and you automatically grant Future and its licensees a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in any/all issues and/or editions of publications, in any format published worldwide and on associated websites, social media channels and associated products. Any material you submit is sent at your own risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents, subcontractors or licensees shall be liable for loss or damage. We assume all unsolicited material is for publication unless otherwise stated, and reserve the right to edit, amend, adapt all submissions.

ipso. Regulated

Widely Recycled

FUTURE
Connectors.
Creators.
Experience
Makers.

Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR)
www.futureplc.com

Chief Executive Officer **Jon Steinberg**
Non-Executive Chairman **Richard Huntingford**
Chief Financial and Strategy Officer **Penny Ladkin-Brand**

Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244

CONTENTS

ISSUE 135

ALL ABOUT...

Key Events 12
Timeline of the Kingdom of Kush

Inside History 14
The Meroë pyramids

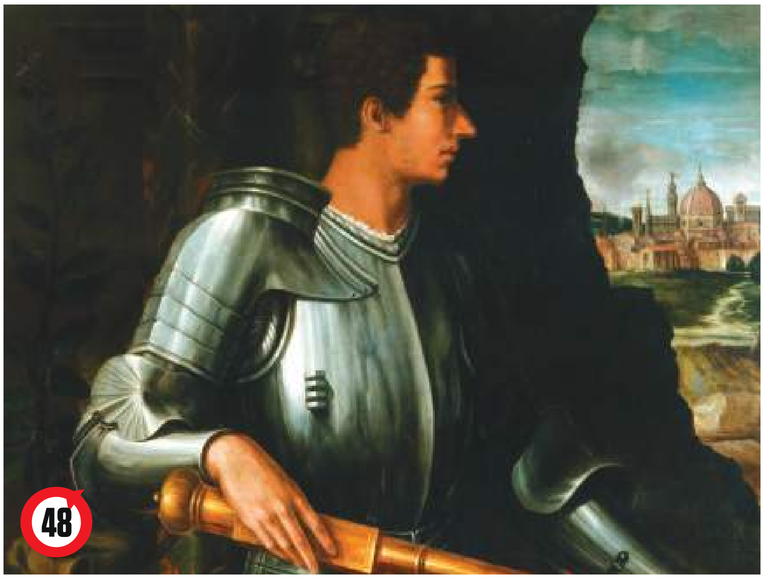
Anatomy 16
A Kushite archer

Historical Treasures 17
Kushite ceramic jar

Hall Of Fame 18
Kushite kings and queens

Q&A 20
Stuart Tyson Smith discusses Egypt's influence on Kush

Places To Explore 22
Amazing archaeological sites



FEATURES

26 **The Psychology of Salem**
Why this Massachusetts community became witch obsessed

36 **Ancient Royal Scandals**
Schemes, murders and affairs that shocked antiquity

42 **The AIDS Crisis**
How pandemic turned to panic and prejudice

48 **Black Prince of Florence**
How Alessandro de' Medici came to rule the Renaissance city

54 **The Other SAS**
Discover the special WWII unit led by the other Stirling brother

58 **Who Was Mary Seacole?**
Uncover the life of Britain's Caribbean nursing heroine

REGULARS

Defining Moments 06
Photos with amazing stories

Greatest Battles 64
Henry IV takes on the Hotspur rebels at Shrewsbury

What If 70
Russia had kept California?

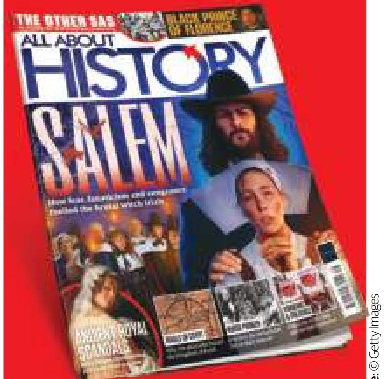
Through History 74
Evolution of Chinese fan designs

Reviews 78
Our verdict on the latest historical books and media

History Vs Hollywood 81
Does *Call Northside 777* report the whole truth?

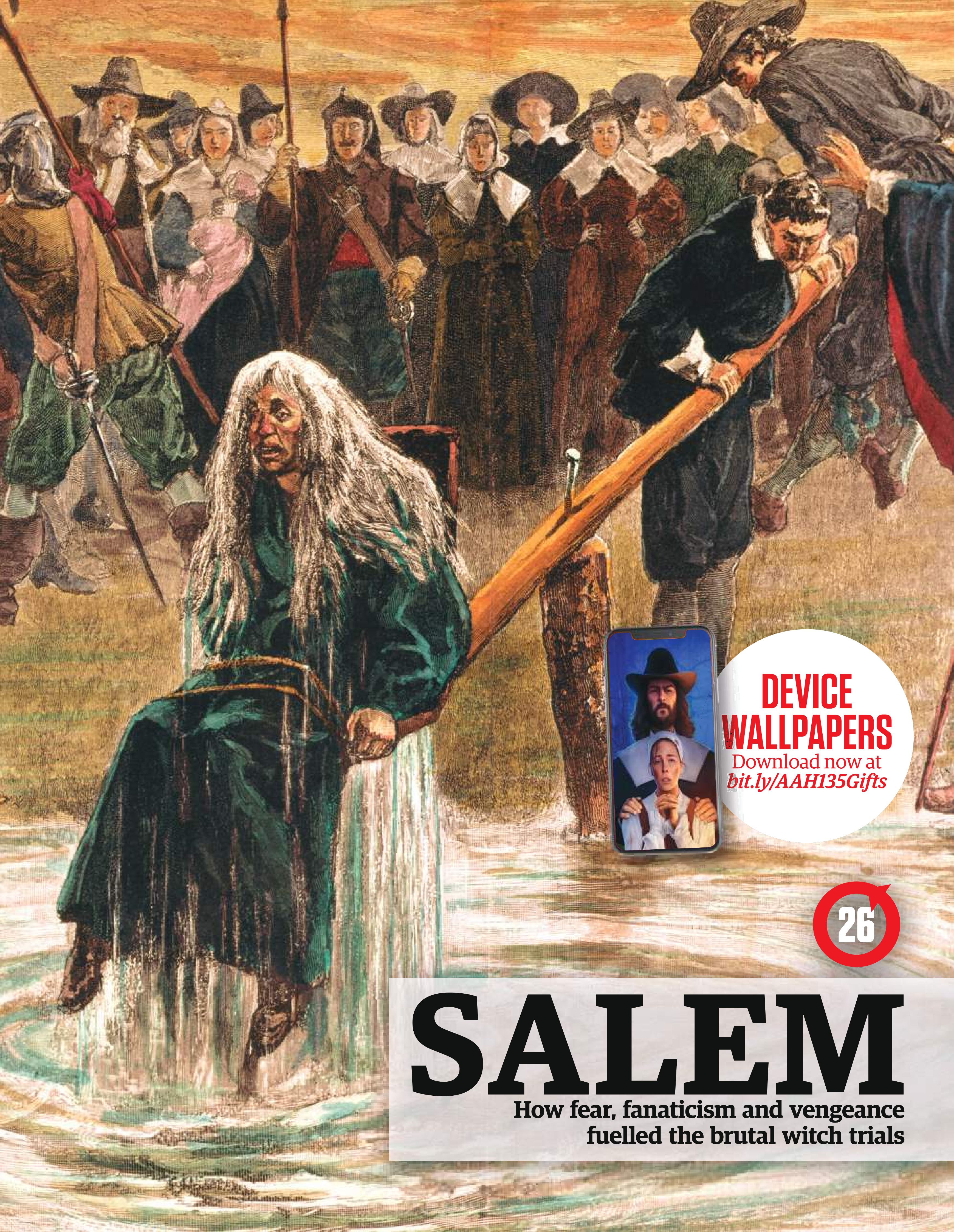
Recipe 82
How to make gingerbread cake

Subscribe and save!



Discover our exclusive offer for new readers on page 24

Main image: © Getty Images



DEVICE WALLPAPERS
Download now at
bit.ly/AAH135Gifts

26

SALEM

How fear, fanaticism and vengeance fuelled the brutal witch trials

Defining Moments

© Getty Images

14 October 1964

MARTIN LUTHER KING WINS THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

On 14 October 1964, Martin Luther King Jr was announced as the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize "for his non-violent struggle for civil rights for the Afro-American population". King was awarded the Prize just a year after he gave his famous *I Have A Dream* speech at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC to 250,000 people. King was presented the Prize in December 1964 at a ceremony in Oslo, Norway.

30 October 1974

MUHAMMAD ALI KNOCKS OUT GEORGE FOREMAN

The Rumble in the Jungle took place in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (at the time Zaire). The heavyweight boxing match saw Muhammad Ali face George Foreman, who before the fight was unbeaten. Described as one of the greatest sporting events of the 20th century, the match ended in the eighth round when Ali knocked out Foreman. The two greats never faced each other in the ring again.

© Alamy

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON

Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BE

HIGHLIGHTS OF EVENTS COMING UP AT THE SOCIETY

27 OCT **Special Event**
Phantasmagoria, an evening of Halloween themed activities at the Society

31 OCT **Special Event**
The Mummy, Halloween screening of the 1932 film

09 NOV **Symposium**
Remembering the Destruction of the Old Bridge at Mostar 30 Years On

29 NOV **Conference**
Early Career Researchers' Conference 2023

14 DEC **Christmas Soirée with Mulled Wine Reception**
The History of Christmas by Professor Ronald Hutton FSA

OPEN FRIDAYS

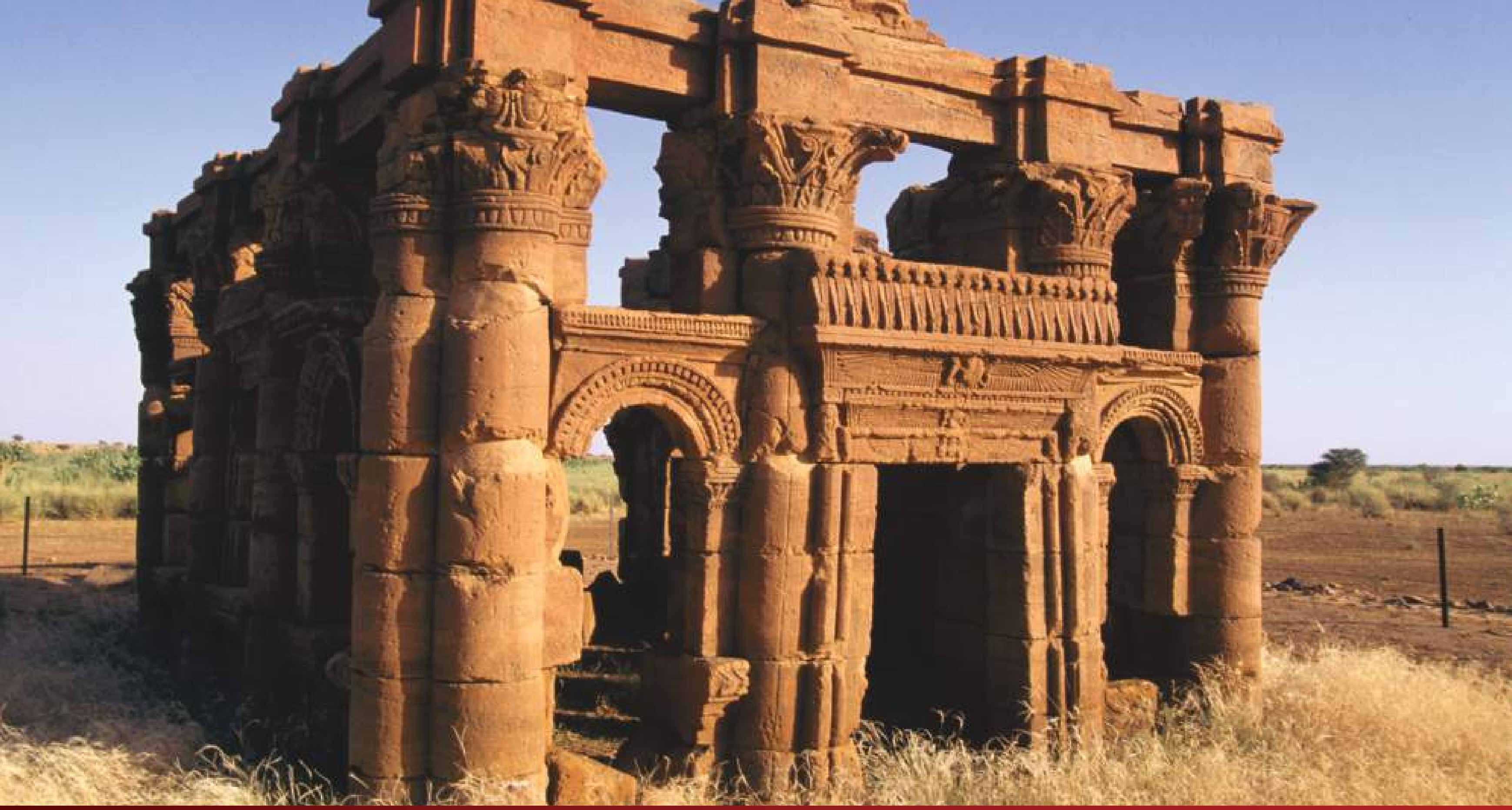
Come and explore hundreds of years of years of collecting history as part of Open Fridays for our project Sensing History.

Book online or drop-in, free admission from 10am - 3.30pm (closing 4pm). Open Fridays will take place on:

Friday 6, 13, 20, 27 Oct
Friday 10, 17, 24 Nov
Friday 8, 15 Dec

Made possible with Heritage Fund

For our full list of events: sal.org.uk/events



ALL ABOUT
KINGDOM OF KUSH

Uncover one of the great lost powers of ancient Africa that once ruled over Egypt, but eventually receded into the desert sands

14 INSIDE A MEROË PYRAMID

16 ANATOMY OF A KUSHITE ARCHER

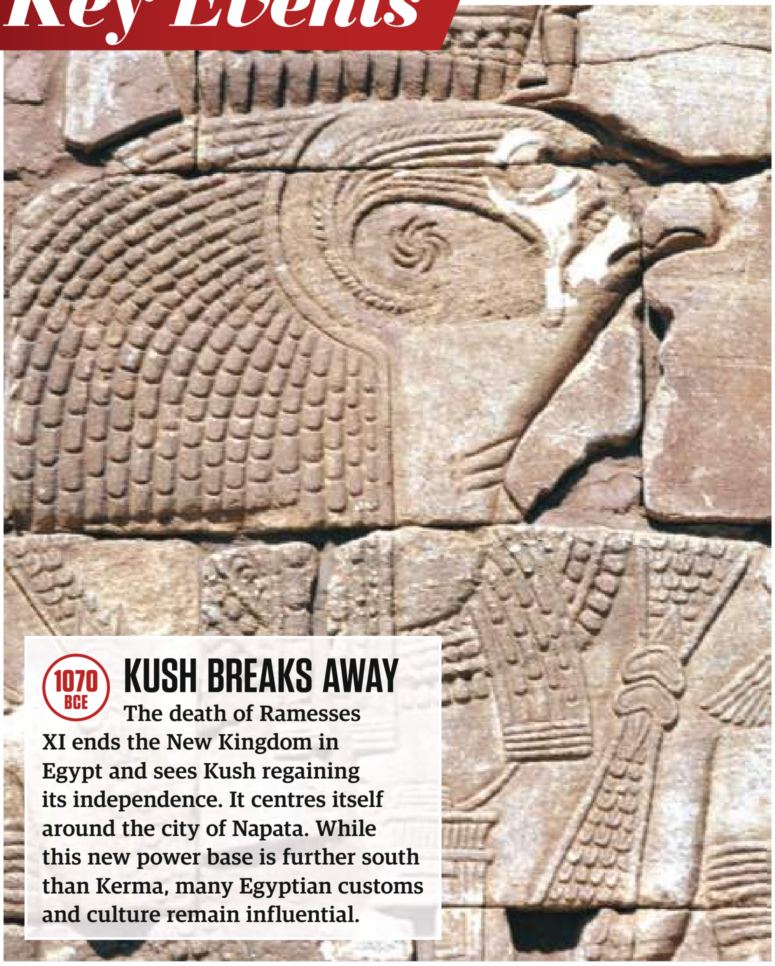
18 KINGS AND QUEENS OF KUSH

20 KUSH AND THE EGYPTIANS

Main image: © Getty Images

Written by Emily Staniforth, Callum McKelvie, Jonathan Gordon, Jackson van Uden

Key Events



1070 BCE

KUSH BREAKS AWAY

The death of Ramesses XI ends the New Kingdom in Egypt and sees Kush regaining its independence. It centres itself around the city of Napata. While this new power base is further south than Kerma, many Egyptian customs and culture remain influential.

The pharaohs of this period claimed to be sons of the god Amun, looking to reunite his domain.

690 BCE

NILE RENAISSANCE

Under Piye and then Taharqa a golden age for Kush and Egypt is created. Work is done to restore many of Egypt's temples and buildings as well as build new monuments and pyramids. Religion and art flourish as the region becomes a major power again.

EARLY CIVILISATION
c.3500 BCE

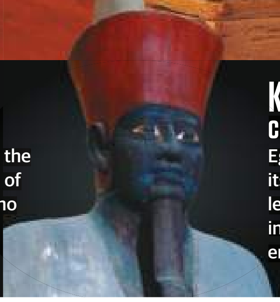
People moving from what is now the Sahara make their new home on the Nile, transitioning from hunting to being farmers and fishermen thanks to the water source.

KERMA CULTURE
c.2500 BCE

The centre of early Kush culture is Kerma, a settlement that is partially fortified. Surviving pottery from the period is notable for its fine detail work and colouring.

KUSH IS NAMED
c.2000 BCE

The first reference by Egyptians to the Kingdom of Kush comes in records of the campaigns of Mentuhotep II who is said to have fought them in the 29th and 31st years of his reign.



KUSH ON THE RISE
c.1700 BCE

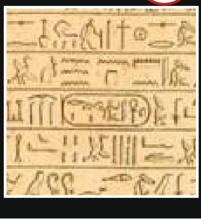
As Egypt goes through what is known as the Second Intermediate Period, the power base of Kerma begins to gain strength, becoming a military power in its own right.

KERMA FALLS
c.1500 BCE

Egypt is back on the rise thanks to its new pharaoh, Thutmose I, who leads a series of campaigns south into Nubia and attacks Kerma, ending its control of the region.

c.1352-36 BCE

1070 BCE



A NEW DYNASTY
c.790 BCE

Alara, a prince of Kush, becomes the first king of a new dynasty based out of Napata. He is believed to have unified the region from Meroë to the Third Cataract of the Nile.

c.1352-36 BCE

GREATER EGYPTIAN INFLUENCE

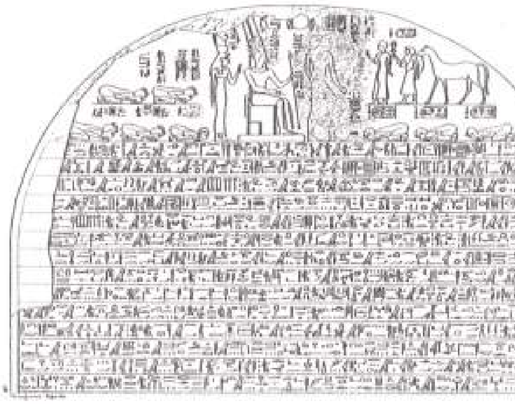
Under Akhenaten's reign, the city of Sesebi is founded, building up a region that had already seen considerable activity. In this period Egyptian cultural influence becomes more dominant in Nubia, evidenced in its pottery designs that have been excavated since.

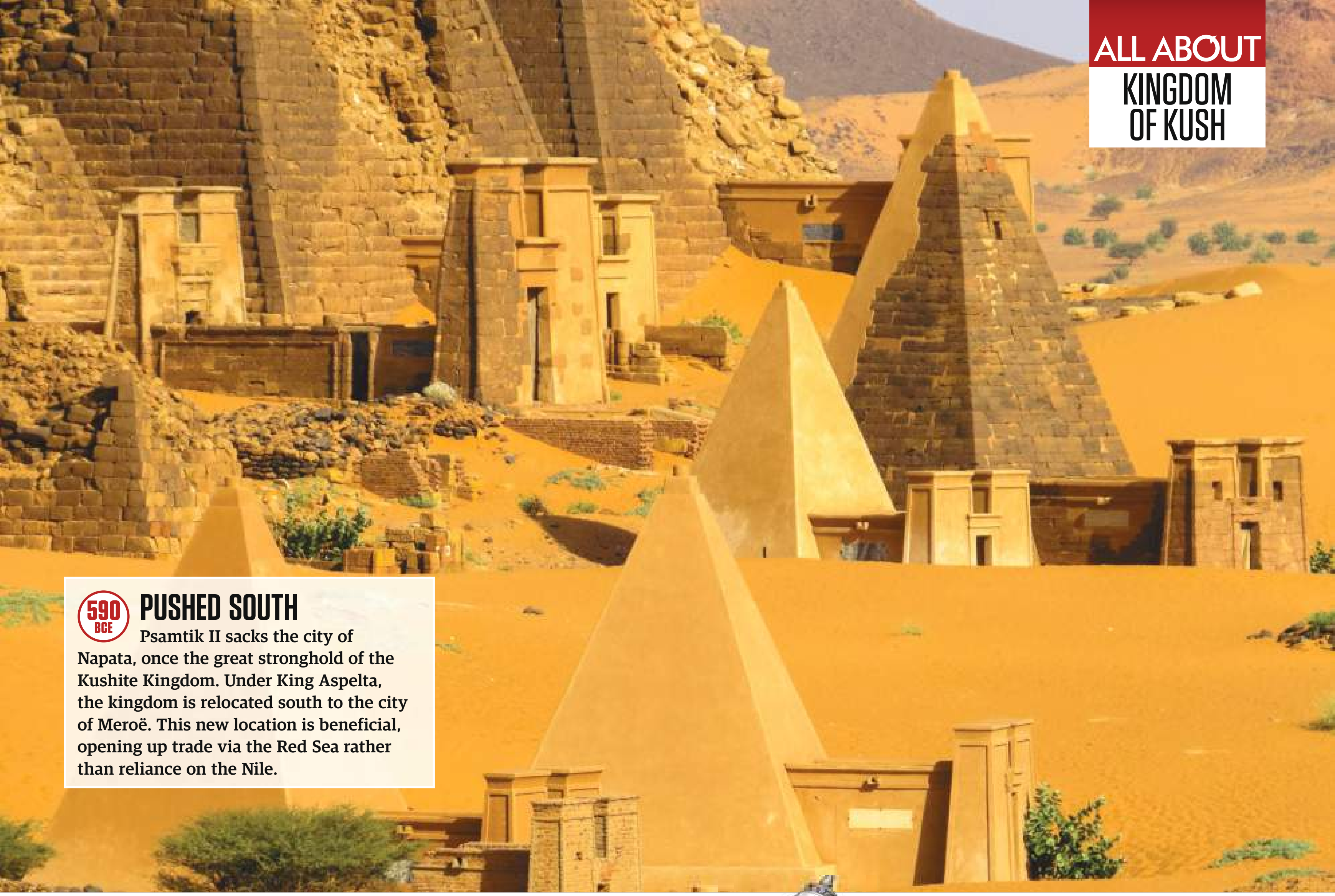
The communities of ancient Nubia are thought to have made some of the most beautiful pottery on the Nile.

c.727 BCE

LIFE OF PIYE

King Piye builds on his father's successes and conquers all of Egypt, first taking Thebes and then the Delta, creating an empire from the Sixth Cataract in the south to the Mediterranean in the north. The new dynasty looks to reconnect Egypt to its cultural roots.





590 BCE

PUSHED SOUTH

Psamtik II sacks the city of Napata, once the great stronghold of the Kushite Kingdom. Under King Aspelta, the kingdom is relocated south to the city of Meroë. This new location is beneficial, opening up trade via the Red Sea rather than reliance on the Nile.

RULERS OF EGYPT
c.750 BCE

Picking up from his brother, King Kashta conquers Upper Egypt and claims the office of pharaoh, marking the beginning of the 25th Dynasty of Egypt.

c.727 BCE

WAR WITH ASSYRIA
c.720 BCE

Piye attempts to expand his empire into Assyria, taking what had been lost to the Middle Assyrian and Hittite Empires, but is pushed back by Shalmaneser V and later by Sargon II.

690 BCE

HOT WAR 674 BCE

The Assyrians invade Egypt, looking to push the Kushites out after years of interference and conflicts across their border. King Esarhaddon begins the campaigns, followed by Sennacherib.

590 BCE

KUSH CRUSHED 664 BCE

Initially installed as governor by the Assyrians, Psamtik I becomes pharaoh with aid of Lydia in western Anatolia and pushes out Kushite remnants, beginning the 26th Dynasty.

A NEW THREAT 350 BCE

The rise of new kingdoms and powers in eastern Africa and on the Arabian peninsula begins to draw wealth away from the Kushite cities, making the region more competitive.

24 BCE

FINDING ITS ROOTS
2ND CENTURY BCE

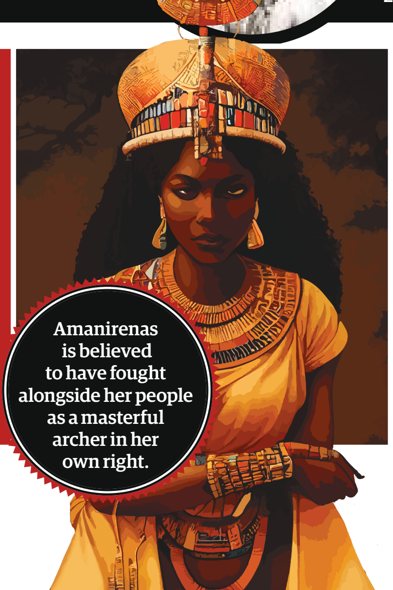
In the ongoing post-Egypt transition, Kush reverts to its African cultural roots with lion-god Apedemak becoming prominent in their art alongside some Egyptian influence.

c.350 CE

24 BCE

THREAT OF ROME

Ruling between 40-10 BCE, Queen Amanirenas is the second queen of Kush when Rome's Emperor Augustus defeats the Egyptians. Amanirenas defends Kush from the Romans, launching a surprise attack and then mounting three years of defence ending in a peace treaty.



Amanirenas is believed to have fought alongside her people as a masterful archer in her own right.

c.350 CE

FALL OF MEROË

The Kingdom of Aksum looks to take out the heart of what is left of the Kushite Kingdom and destroys Meroë. Stele are left behind by the invading forces to chronicle their victory. The city will not be rediscovered by Western archaeologists until 1821.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images, © Shutterstock

MEROË PYRAMID

Sudan
c.300 BCE-300 CE

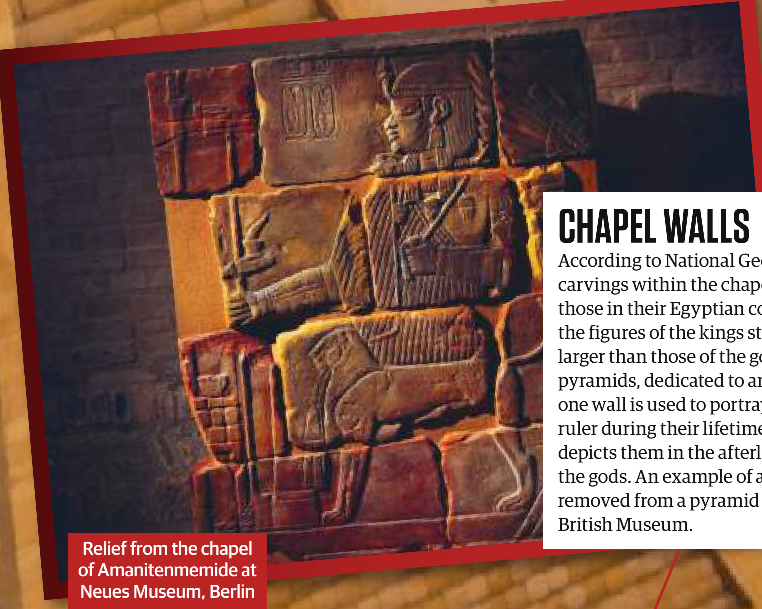
Once the capital of the Kushite Kingdom, the archaeological remains of Meroë are often unfairly overlooked. In particular, the vast burial sites, dotted with their unique pyramids, are far less known than their Egyptian counterparts. There are over 200 pyramids located in Meroë, a significantly greater number than the 118 located in Egypt and the largest congregation of such structures in the world.

Built between 2,300 and 1,700 years ago, the Meroë Pyramids were constructed solely for those with royal blood, though *Archaeology* magazine states that later this rule was relaxed somewhat. Smaller than those to be found in Egypt they pale in comparison to the colossal size of Giza's great pyramid, a vast 481 feet tall and 755 feet along its sides. The pyramids' close placement is believed to have been due to their construction aligning with stars. The designers of the pyramids were believed to be Kush's rulers themselves, who constructed their own burial monument during their respective lifetimes.

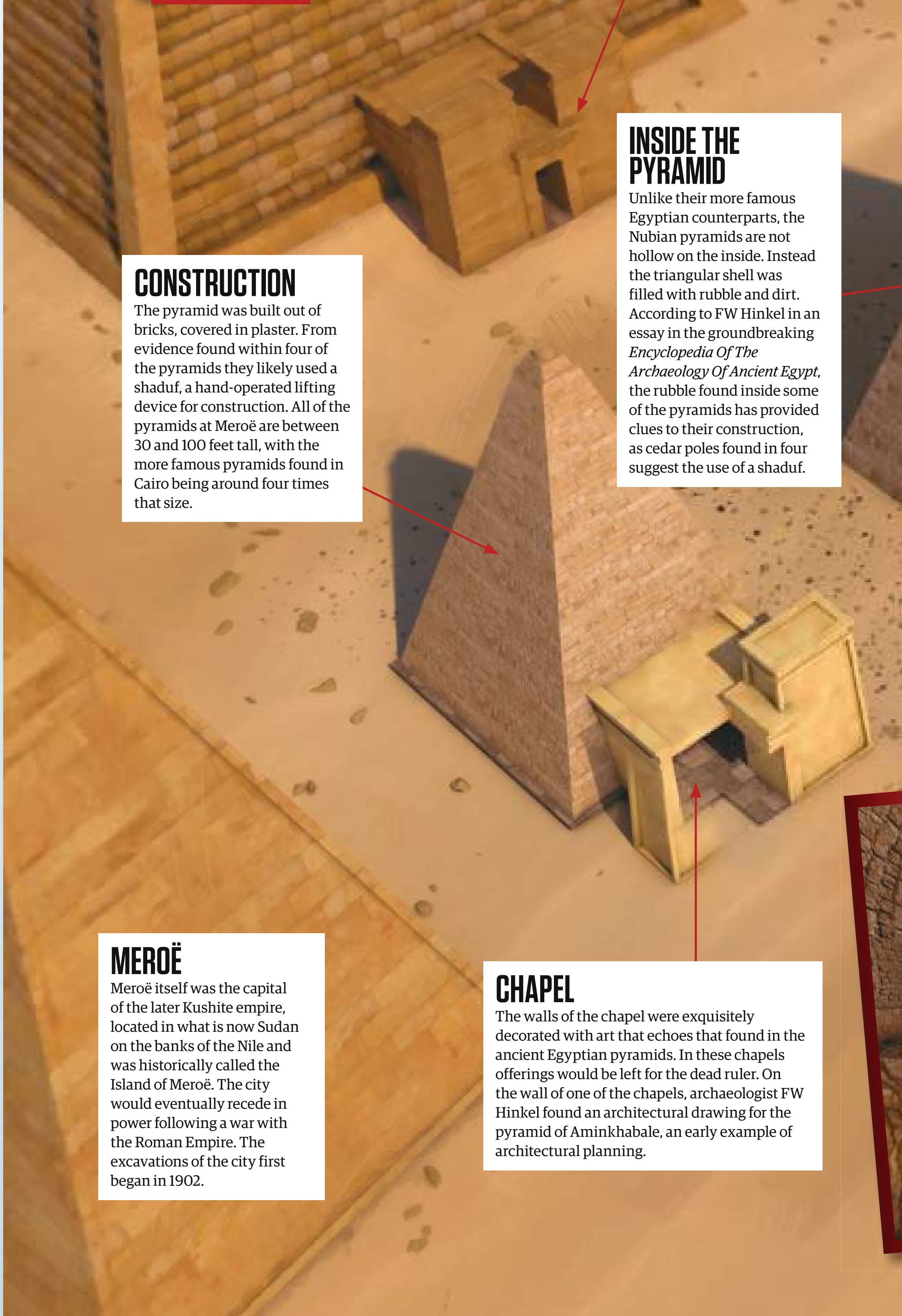
Another unique difference between the pyramids at Meroë and their Egyptian counterparts is the fact that the burial chambers are not located within the structure, but hidden beneath. In this respect, the Nubian pyramids have been described as being more akin to burial headstones in their purpose.

Unfortunately, in the 19th century irreparable damage was done to the site by one Giuseppe Ferlini. A soldier, doctor and treasure hunter, Ferlini raided the tombs at Meroë in his search for hidden riches. In the process he blew up 40 of the ancient pyramids, destroying priceless archaeological evidence in the process.

However, in the years since other archaeologists have investigated Meroë with far more care. One such archaeologist, George Reisner, solved the mystery of their burial chambers' location when he speculated that the tombs were in fact located beneath the pyramids. Reisner was also the first person to create an archaeological based chronology of the Kingdom of Kush's rulers.



Relief from the chapel of Amanitenmemide at Neues Museum, Berlin



CHAPEL WALLS

According to National Geographic, the carvings within the chapels differ to those in their Egyptian counterparts as the figures of the kings stand taller and larger than those of the gods. In one of the pyramids, dedicated to an unknown king, one wall is used to portray images of the ruler during their lifetime while the other depicts them in the afterlife, sitting beside the gods. An example of a chapel wall removed from a pyramid can be seen in the British Museum.

INSIDE THE PYRAMID

Unlike their more famous Egyptian counterparts, the Nubian pyramids are not hollow on the inside. Instead the triangular shell was filled with rubble and dirt. According to FW Hinkel in an essay in the groundbreaking *Encyclopedia Of The Archaeology Of Ancient Egypt*, the rubble found inside some of the pyramids has provided clues to their construction, as cedar poles found in four suggest the use of a shaduf.

CONSTRUCTION

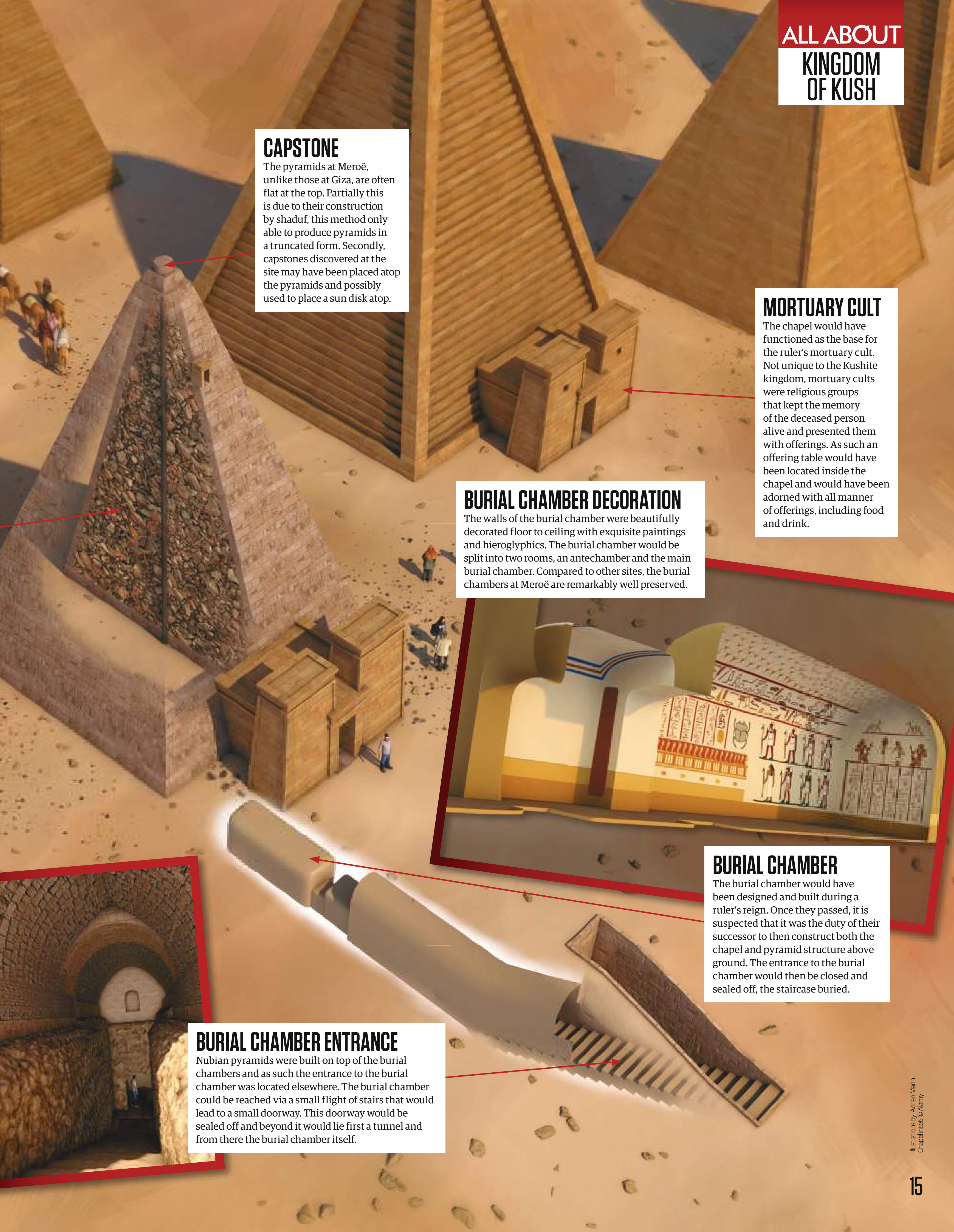
The pyramid was built out of bricks, covered in plaster. From evidence found within four of the pyramids they likely used a shaduf, a hand-operated lifting device for construction. All of the pyramids at Meroë are between 30 and 100 feet tall, with the more famous pyramids found in Cairo being around four times that size.

MEROË

Meroë itself was the capital of the later Kushite empire, located in what is now Sudan on the banks of the Nile and was historically called the Island of Meroë. The city would eventually recede in power following a war with the Roman Empire. The excavations of the city first began in 1902.

CHAPEL

The walls of the chapel were exquisitely decorated with art that echoes that found in the ancient Egyptian pyramids. In these chapels offerings would be left for the dead ruler. On the wall of one of the chapels, archaeologist FW Hinkel found an architectural drawing for the pyramid of Aminkhabale, an early example of architectural planning.



CAPSTONE

The pyramids at Meroë, unlike those at Giza, are often flat at the top. Partially this is due to their construction by shaduf, this method only able to produce pyramids in a truncated form. Secondly, capstones discovered at the site may have been placed atop the pyramids and possibly used to place a sun disk atop.

MORTUARY CULT

The chapel would have functioned as the base for the ruler's mortuary cult. Not unique to the Kushite kingdom, mortuary cults were religious groups that kept the memory of the deceased person alive and presented them with offerings. As such an offering table would have been located inside the chapel and would have been adorned with all manner of offerings, including food and drink.

BURIAL CHAMBER DECORATION

The walls of the burial chamber were beautifully decorated floor to ceiling with exquisite paintings and hieroglyphics. The burial chamber would be split into two rooms, an antechamber and the main burial chamber. Compared to other sites, the burial chambers at Meroë are remarkably well preserved.

BURIAL CHAMBER

The burial chamber would have been designed and built during a ruler's reign. Once they passed, it is suspected that it was the duty of their successor to then construct both the chapel and pyramid structure above ground. The entrance to the burial chamber would then be closed and sealed off, the staircase buried.

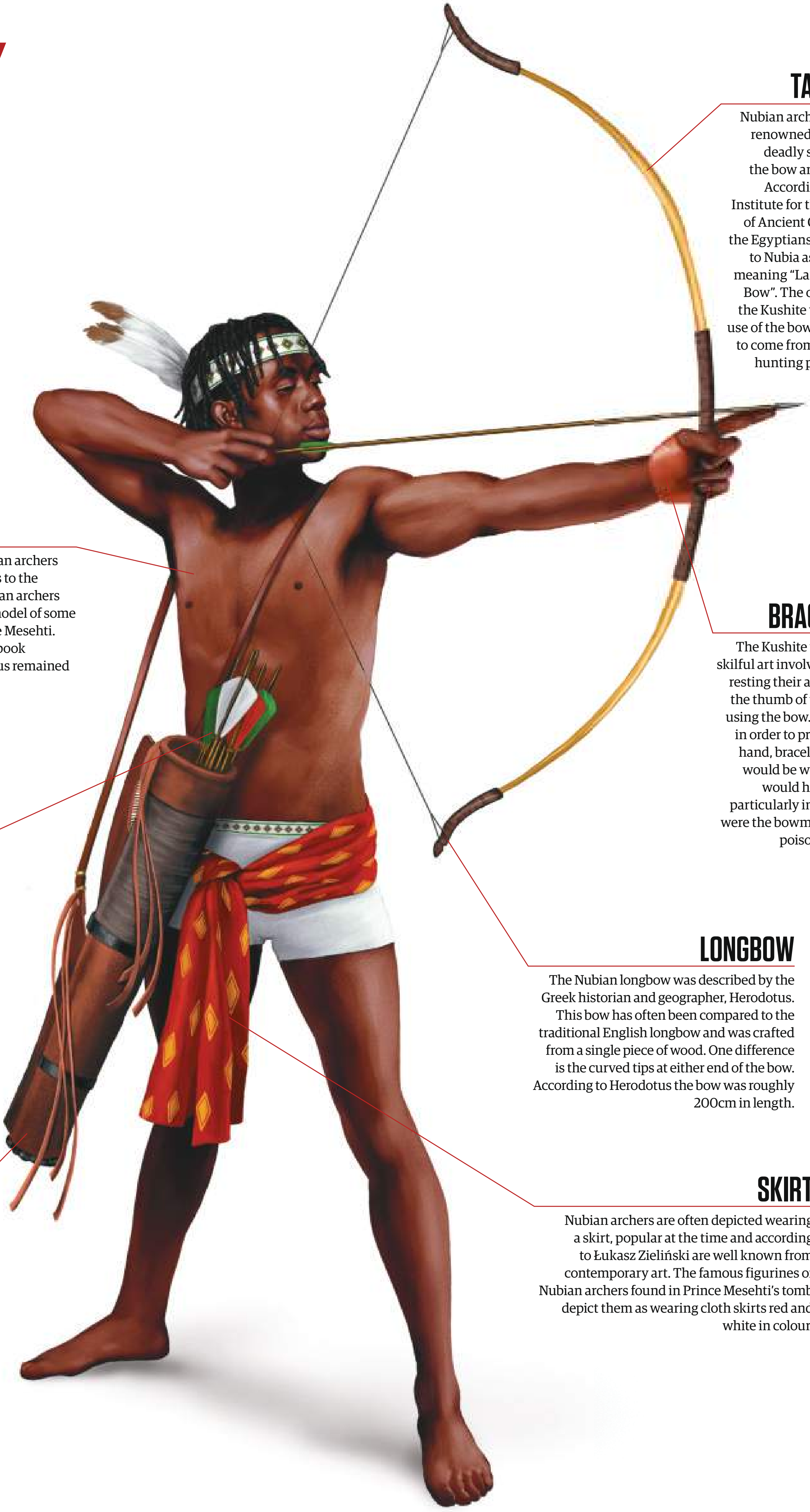
BURIAL CHAMBER ENTRANCE

Nubian pyramids were built on top of the burial chambers and as such the entrance to the burial chamber was located elsewhere. The burial chamber could be reached via a small flight of stairs that would lead to a small doorway. This doorway would be sealed off and beyond it would lie first a tunnel and from there the burial chamber itself.

Illustrations by: Adrian Mann
Chapel inset: © Alamy

KUSHITE ARCHER

Sudan
780 BCE - 350 CE



TA-SETI

Nubian archers were renowned for their deadly skill with the bow and arrow. According to the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, the Egyptians referred to Nubia as Ta-Seti, meaning "Land of the Bow". The origins of the Kushite warriors' use of the bow appears to come from ancient hunting practices.

MERCENARIES

Due to their skill with the bow, Nubian archers were often employed as mercenaries to the Egyptian armies. Depictions of Nubian archers can be found in Egyptian art and a model of some has been found in the tomb of Prince Mesehti. According to Toby Wilkinson in his book *Tutankhamun's Trumpet* the bow thus remained a symbol of a subject people.

BRACELET

The Kushite warriors' skilful art involved them resting their arrows on the thumb of the hand using the bow. As such, in order to protect the hand, bracelet gloves would be worn. This would have been particularly important were the bowman using poisoned tips.

POISONED ARROWS

The Kushite bowmen were known to use arrows dipped in deadly poison. Any unfortunate soldier hit by such an arrow, even if the wound was not fatal, would suffer an agonising death. Other arrows were barbed meaning they were difficult to remove and likely to cause further damage should an attempt be made to pull them free.

LONGBOW

The Nubian longbow was described by the Greek historian and geographer, Herodotus. This bow has often been compared to the traditional English longbow and was crafted from a single piece of wood. One difference is the curved tips at either end of the bow. According to Herodotus the bow was roughly 200cm in length.

QUIVER

A quiver is the name given to the holder archers use to contain their arrows. According to Łukasz Zieliński in his paper *New Insights Into Nubian Archery*, one example found suggests that the quiver would have been worn not on the back but at the side or front. They likely would have been made from rawhide or leather.

SKIRT

Nubian archers are often depicted wearing a skirt, popular at the time and according to Łukasz Zieliński are well known from contemporary art. The famous figurines of Nubian archers found in Prince Mesehti's tomb depict them as wearing cloth skirts red and white in colour.

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

CERAMIC JAR

The Kingdom of Kush was known for its exquisite pottery

Sudan, 100 BCE - 300 CE

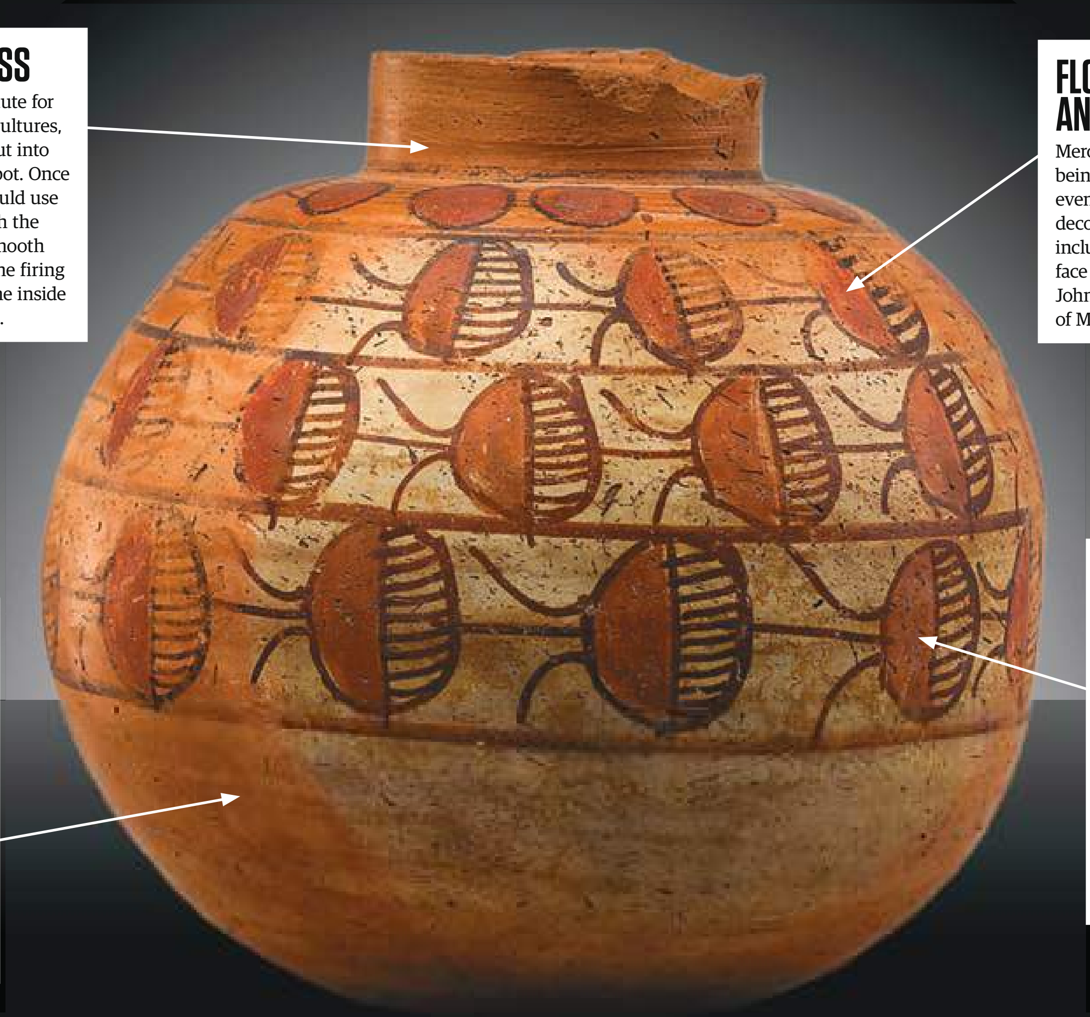
The Kingdom of Kush was famous for its beautiful pottery and according to archeologist Mahmoud Suliman Bashir, "pottery is one of the main cultural artefacts of Meroitic society usually found at archaeological sites." Some of this pottery is believed to have been imported to Meroë from lower-Nubia. According to Samia B Dafa'alla in an article for the Penn Museum's *Expedition* magazine, these markets often saw the import of a lot of Greco-Roman pottery and explains the obvious Mediterranean influences on some Meroitic works.

One possible origin point for the Kingdom of Kush is the Kingdom of Kerma. This civilisation, active from roughly 2,500 BCE to 1,500 BCE, was similarly renowned for its exquisite pottery. The so-called Kerma beakers are the most famous examples of Kerma ceramics. According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art these would have been produced in a temperature controlled kiln. They are known for their red colouring at the base that bleeds into black colouring at the rim. When Kerma culture vanished it is possible that Kush emerged from its ruins, inheriting their secrets of pottery making.

The majority of Meroitic pottery is painted and this allows archaeologists to discern similarities in some of the works, suggesting that they were produced by the same artist. According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, this implies that either the artists moved around frequently, or that Meroë was at the centre of a booming ceramics industry. Indeed, it is suspected that the pottery produced at Meroë was created both for domestic use and also for artistic purposes. Potters would make use of wood-burning kilns in their craft, and these kilns gave the artists the ability to control the temperature and create some truly exquisite works.

While some artefacts have intricate geometric designs, others feature floral decorations, animals or anthropomorphic figures. A popular figure included in numerous examples is that of a crocodile. In this way Meroitic pottery differs greatly from Egyptian pottery, which in many cases is more simplistic and less decorated.

The example of Meroitic pottery shown here is a spherical jar, currently among the collections of the Metropolitan Museum, New York and purchased in Luxor, Egypt in 1908.



FIRING PROCESS

According to the Institute for the study of Ancient Cultures, immense effort was put into the decoration of the pot. Once painted, the potter would use a small pebble to brush the ceramic until it was smooth and ready for firing. The firing process would leave the inside of the pot a dark black.

FLORAL AND ANIMAL MOTIFS

Meroitic pottery is known for being highly decorative. Some even have three-dimensional decoration; unusual examples include an impression of a face on a plaque found during John Garstang's excavations of Meroë, and a spiked vase.

MEROITIC STYLE

According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, although pottery from the Kingdom of Kush does have influences, particularly Egyptian, a distinctive style was developed. Some of the pottery from this period is known for being very thin and has been nicknamed eggshell pottery.

COLOURS

According to a chapter in Peter L Shinnie and Julie R Anderson's edited volume *The Capital Of Kush*, the colour on Meroitic pottery was due to the use of red and black iron oxides. These oxides could produce a variety of colours including yellow and maroon.

© Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Hall of Fame

KUSHITE KINGS AND QUEENS

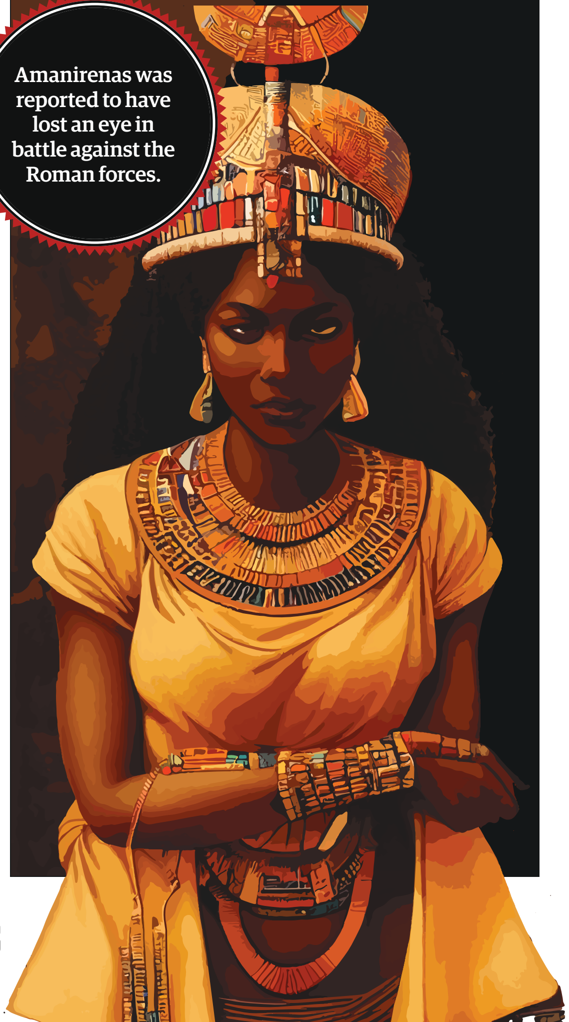
A selection of some of the Kingdom of Kush's most important rulers

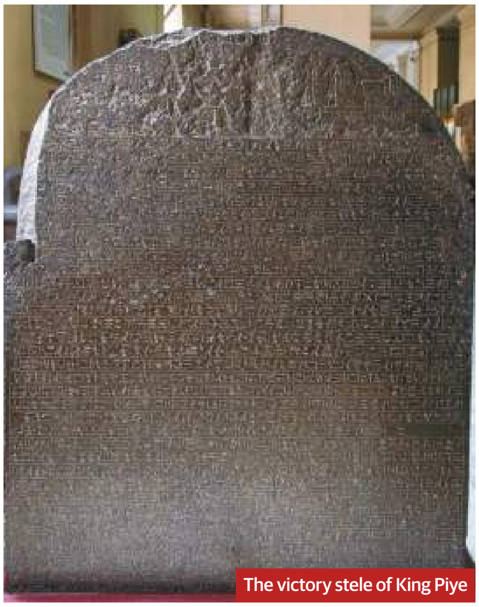
Amanirenas

Reigned: c.40 BCE – c.10 BCE

The second of the eight Kandakes of Kush, Amanirenas ruled over the kingdom at the same time as Cleopatra and Mark Antony were reigning over Egypt. However, when the Roman Emperor Augustus seized power in Egypt, Rome also made their claims to Nubia. Amanirenas, who lost her husband in a battle against the Romans in the early stages of the Roman occupation, led troops in attacks on cities in Roman-occupied Egypt in order to defend Nubia's sovereignty. The war between Rome and Kush finally ended when Amanirenas helped broker a peace treaty that established the kingdom's ongoing independence and autonomy.

Amanirenas was reported to have lost an eye in battle against the Roman forces.





The victory stele of King Piye

PIYE

REIGNED: C.744 BCE – C.714 BCE

Piye, also sometimes referred to as Piankhi or Pankhy, was the third King of Kush. He is credited with consolidating Kushite rule in Egypt and is considered the founder of the 25th Dynasty of the Kush Egyptian Pharaohs. During his reign, Piye travelled through Egypt, defeating local princes and obtaining tributes from those who surrendered to his forces. Piye did not remain in Egypt, however, and returned to Napata to continue ruling over Kush. His victories in Egypt were recorded on a magnificent stele that was discovered at Jebel Barkal. Three of Piye's sons succeeded him as kings of Kush and Egypt.

ALARA

REIGNED: C.790 BCE – C.760 BCE

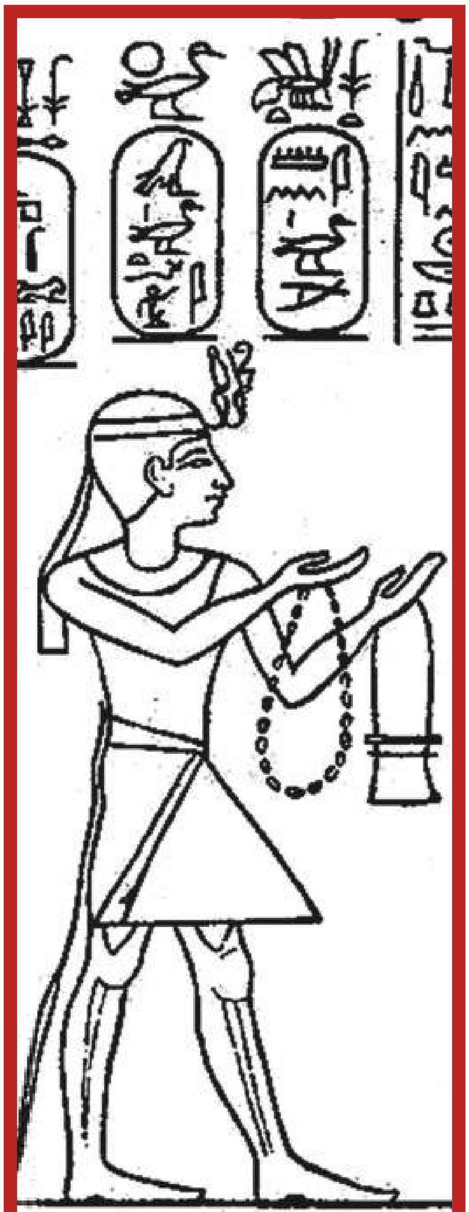
Alara was the first Kushite king and is credited with founding the great Kingdom of Kush through the unification of the various localities that made up Nubia. It is possible that Alara based his new royal position on the model of the Egyptian pharaohs, showing how Kushite culture was influenced by their neighbours. Though little is known about his reign, Alara has been identified through inscriptions dating from the reigns of his descendents and successors.

Aspelta

Reigned: c.600 BCE – c.580 BCE

King Aspelta is well known by historians and archaeologists of the Kushite kingdom due to the wealth of artefacts linked to him and his reign that have been discovered at various sites. Aspelta's tomb was the second largest at the cemetery at Nuri and contained a treasure trove of historical objects. His granite sarcophagus, now held at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, stands as an incredible example of Kushite burial traditions. Aspelta's reign was also recorded by several stelae that have survived over the centuries. He inherited the throne from his brother, Anlamani, and was believed to have had several wives.

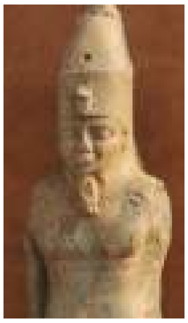
Aspelta was likely responsible for moving the Kush capital from Napata to Meroë after an Egyptian invasion in c.590 BCE.



Harsiotef

Reigned: c.404 BCE – c.369 BCE

With a reign lasting around 35 years, Harsiotef was the longest recorded serving ruler of the Kingdom of Kush. Much about the king's reign is known from the Stele of Harsiotef, also known as the Annals of Harsiotef, which was discovered at Jebel Barkal in modern-day Sudan in the 19th century. The stele records many of the battles fought by Harsiotef, as well as some of his other activities as king. Evidence from the stele highlights the prosperity of Harsiotef's reign, as it describes him putting gold in the treasury at Napata and gilding statues at a temple dedicated to Amun.



NATAKAMANI

REIGNED: UNKNOWN - C.20 CE

While Natakamani served as Kush's king, he appears to not have ruled alone but alongside his mother, Amanitore. It is believed that this co-rulership between mother and son was a unique occurrence in Kush's history. The pair are credited with several building projects, including the restoration of the temple of Amun in Jebel Barkal. Depictions of Natakamani and his mother seem to imply that they were always considered to have equal authority in their partnership.

SHANAKDAKHETE

REIGNED: 1ST CENTURY CE

Though it was originally thought that Shanakdakhete was the first of Kush's infamous queens, known as the Kandake, it has been ascertained that she was actually the second sole female ruler after Queen Nahirqo. Much of Shanakdakhete's life and reign remains a mystery, but it is known that she built many temples, including one at Naqa. Translations of the hieroglyphics at the Naqa temple, which were accompanied by images of her, were used to identify the ancient queen.

KASHTA

REIGNED: C.760 BCE – C.744 BCE

Kashta, believed to be the brother of Kush's founder Alara, set in motion the efforts of the Kushites to conquer Egypt. While the Egyptian Empire was declining, Kashta established his daughter in the prominent position of God's Wife of Amun at Thebes, giving him power and influence in the region. Kashta then made his move and took control of Egypt. This allowed his son, Piye, to consolidate Kush's authority over Egypt, when he ascended to the throne.

AMANISHAKHETO

REIGNED: EARLY 1ST CENTURY CE

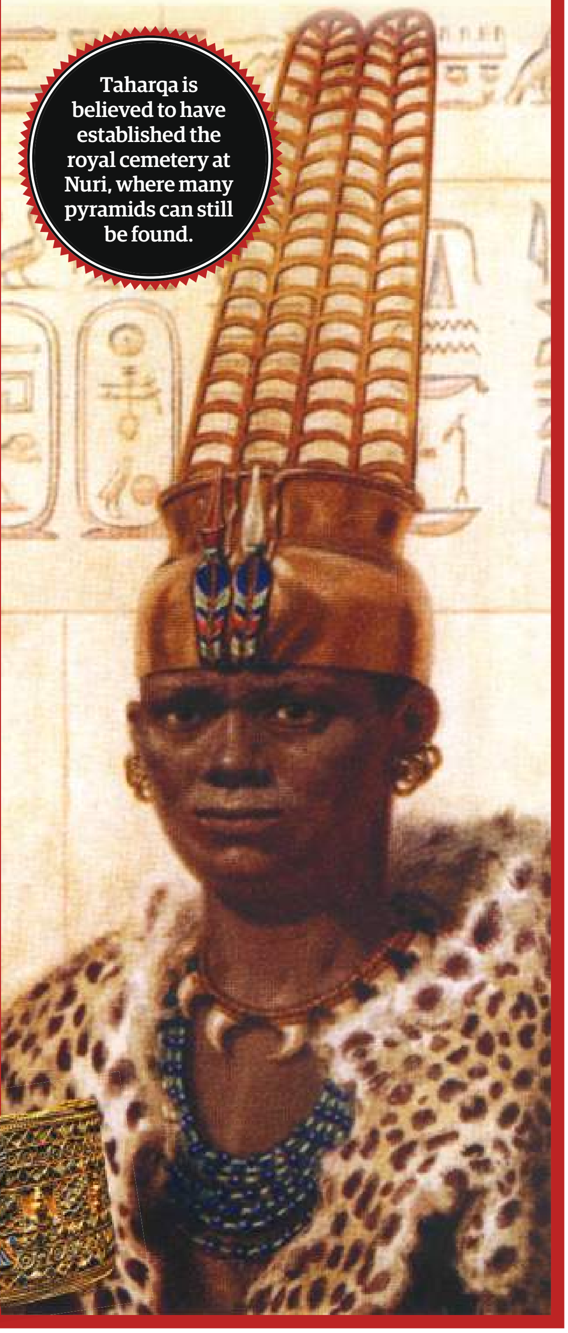
The successor to Amanirenas, Amanishakheto is probably best known for the huge collection of gold jewellery that was taken from her tomb in the 1830s. The beautiful treasures highlight the wealth of this Kush queen regnant, who was responsible for the building of some of the pyramids at Meroë as well as a huge palace at Wad ban Naqa. Depictions of her often show her accompanied by several prominent goddesses, including the warrior goddess Amesemi.

A gold bracelet taken from the tomb of Amanishakheto

Taharqa

Reigned: c.690 BCE – c.664 BCE

A son of Piye, King of Kush and Pharaoh of Egypt, Taharqa engaged in a war with the Assyrians during his reign. He successfully defeated the Assyrian army, led by King Esarhaddon, but this victory was short-lived. The Assyrians went on to capture Memphis, in Egypt, and Taharqa was forced back to the Kush capital of Napata. Egypt would be recaptured for a short time by Taharqa's successor who served as the last Kushite Pharaoh of the 25th Dynasty. Aside from the conflict with the Assyrians, Taharqa appears to have ruled over a period of prosperity for Kush.



Taharqa is believed to have established the royal cemetery at Nuri, where many pyramids can still be found.

All images: © Alamy, © Shutterstock

Q&A

THE INFLUENCE OF EGYPT

Stuart Tyson Smith talks us through the Kushites' significant relationship with their Egyptian neighbours

What part did the decline of the ancient Egyptian empire play in the foundation of the Kush empire at Napata in c.1069 BCE?
It is clear from both the historical and archaeological record that the Nubian colony broke away from Egypt, not the other way around. After a failed attempt to seize the Egyptian throne, the last viceroy of Kush, Panehesy, retreated south to the colonial capital at Aniba. Early Kushite rulers would have been able to draw upon the old imperial infrastructure, including personnel, settlements, and a sacred (and economic) landscape of temples. They also inherited and expanded trade routes and connections stretching south to Darfur/Chad and the Red Sea, and north to Egypt and beyond, as far as Mesopotamia. It is important to remember that there was a long and continuous tradition of centralised political organisation in Nubia stretching back to the earlier Kerma centred kingdom of Kush, continuing through the colonial era and arguably directly into the early Napatan period.

How did the Egyptians influence Kushite architecture and culture?
Cultural influence was mutual. For example, Kushite temples largely followed along Egyptian lines with large entrance pylons showing Kushite kings smiting enemies, followed by columned halls leading to the inner sanctum where the statue of the god lay. In a Kushite twist, some temples had sanctuaries that were cut into the side of mountains, like Abu Simbel, commissioned by Ramesses II in the New Kingdom, and the Mut Temple at Jebel Barkal/Napata commissioned by Taharqa during the 25th Dynasty. These temples focused on the Egyptian god Amun-Re, who had been syncretized, or merged, with a local ram deity during the colonial era, including a new theology of the mountain of Jebel Barkal as the birthplace of Amun and imagery of the now ram-headed god residing in the mountain.

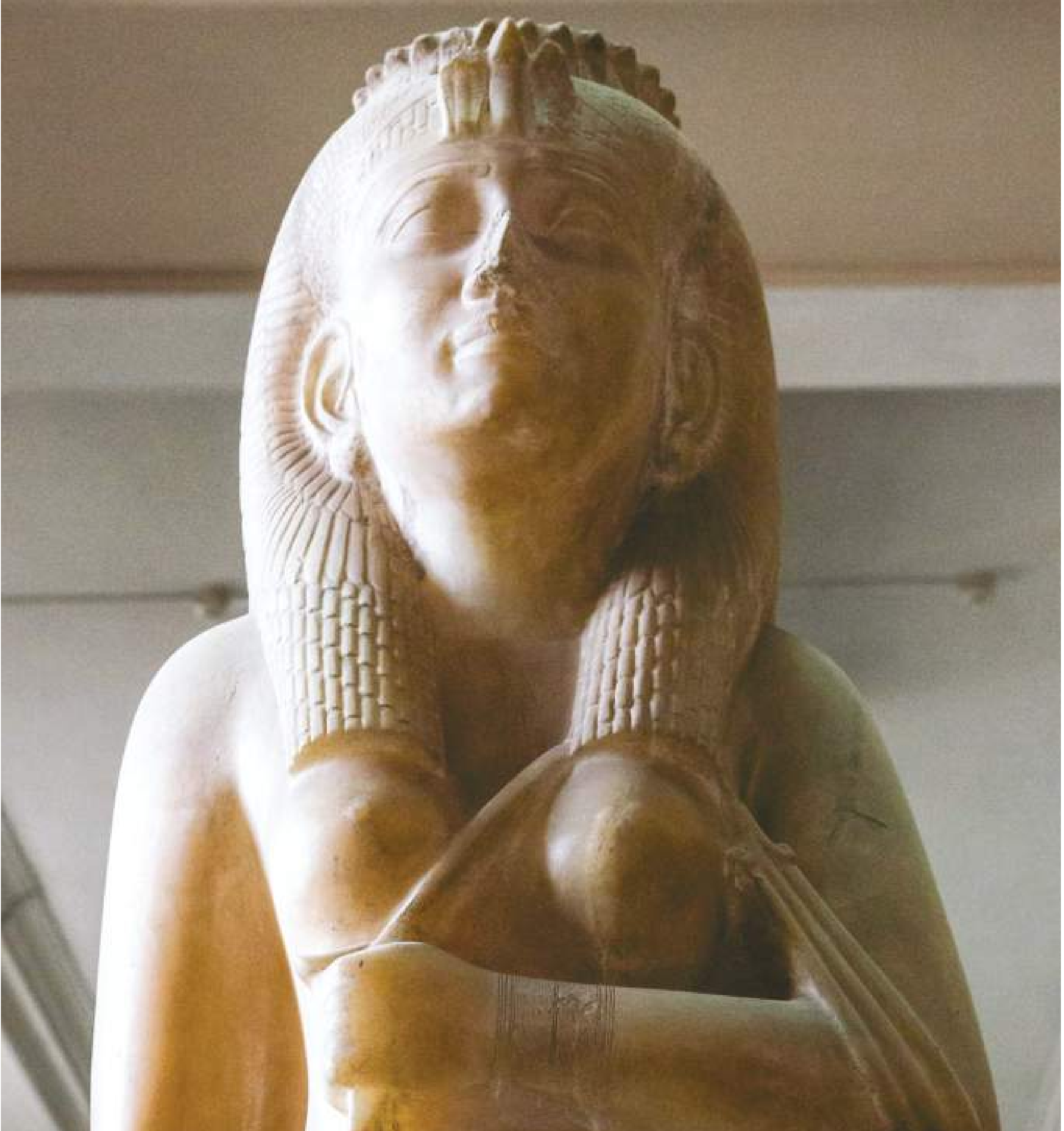
Kushite kings and queens were buried under pyramids, a practice borrowed from Egypt. These monuments were based not on Egyptian royal pyramids like those at Giza, but instead draw from a long history of pyramid building in Nubia for the tombs of the colonial elites, both Egyptian and indigenous, with distinctive steep sides and attached pyloned pyramid chapels. One contrast with Egyptian practice is the prominence of queens in the royal cemeteries. They often had pyramid complexes of equal size and complexity to those of kings, reflecting their symbolic and political role in Kushite society.

For the broader population, burial practice was remarkably creative in its intercultural mixing, including different combinations of the Egyptian supine position (extended on back), wrapped and possibly mummified and placed in a coffin, but sometimes placed on a bed reflecting a long-standing Kushite tradition that continues today. The Nubian/Kushite tradition of flexed burials also continued right through the colonial era and into the 25th Dynasty and beyond, side by side with more Egyptian influenced practices. Amulets reflect the worship of a selection of Egyptian deities, including the cow goddess Hathor, queenly Isis, and protective dwarf gods Bes and Pataikos, the latter often being paired with a leonine goddess in a distinctive double-sided form.

Stuart Tyson Smith is an archaeologist and professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His research interests centre on the ancient civilisations of Nubia and Egypt and their interactions with one another.

Can you tell us a bit about how the Kushite kings came to claim Egypt as the pharaohs of the 25th Dynasty?
The historical evidence points towards a peaceful assumption of control first in

Headshot photo courtesy of: Stuart Tyson Smith and the Tombos Project



Aswan, with its deep historical ties to Nubia, and later at Thebes, which after a short period of hostility developed a close relationship to Kush after the end of the empire. When Piye marched north to suppress a rebellion by competing dynasts in the Nile Delta (c. 727 BCE), he was already firmly in control of Thebes. Kushite kings adopted a new, more decentralised ruling strategy, merciful to their enemies and allowing local rulers to continue under them so long as they acknowledged their authority.

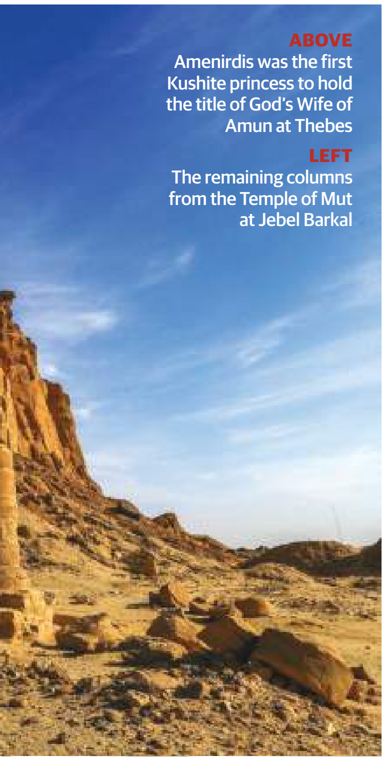
In the end they were pushed out of Egypt by Assyrians, allied with their enemies in the Delta, but their Theban supporters joined them in their attempt to push the Assyrians back, which is a testament to the loyalty inspired by their Kushite rulers.

How important was the role of the Kushite princesses in Thebes during the 25th Dynasty?

Starting with Piye's sister Amenirdis, Kushite princesses were adopted as heirs to the important theological and political position of God's Wife of Amun. Since the adoptees were always the daughter of the next king, this implies that Piye's father Kashta was already ruling in southern Egypt. The power of the office reached its highest point under Kushite princesses Amenirdis and her successor Shepenwepet II, daughter of Piye. Along with a significant diaspora of Kushite officials and supporting staff, they provided a powerful Kushite political and economic presence in southern Egypt, one that reinforced Kushite control and bound them even closer to Thebes and the very important cult of Amun-Re.

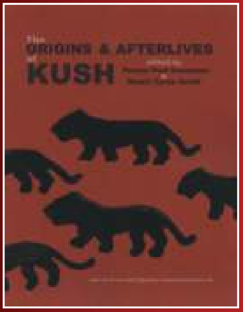
How was the ethnic and cultural identity of the Kushites affected by their continuing interactions with the Egyptians?

Recent archaeological research provides evidence that the former colonial centres were not abandoned but continued to thrive, becoming more and more entangled with the local culture. At the same time, Nubian culture borrowed and adapted some Egyptian features, creating a kind of multi-ethnic society in the aftermath of the empire. Eventually, this coalesced into a new, distinctively Kushite ethnic identity that interwove long-standing Kushite features with Egyptian and eventually Hellenistic ideas and practices, forming a sophisticated and cosmopolitan society influenced by and influencing the wider world, even beyond Egypt.



ABOVE Amenirdis was the first Kushite princess to hold the title of God's Wife of Amun at Thebes

LEFT The remaining columns from the Temple of Mut at Jebel Barkal



THE ORIGINS AND AFTERLIVES OF KUSH

PROCEEDINGS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA BARBARA CONFERENCE IN NUBIAN STUDIES, JOURNAL OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN INTERCONNECTIONS 35 (THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION, 2022) EDITED BY STUART TYSON SMITH AND PEARCE PAUL CREASMAN IS AVAILABLE NOW.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

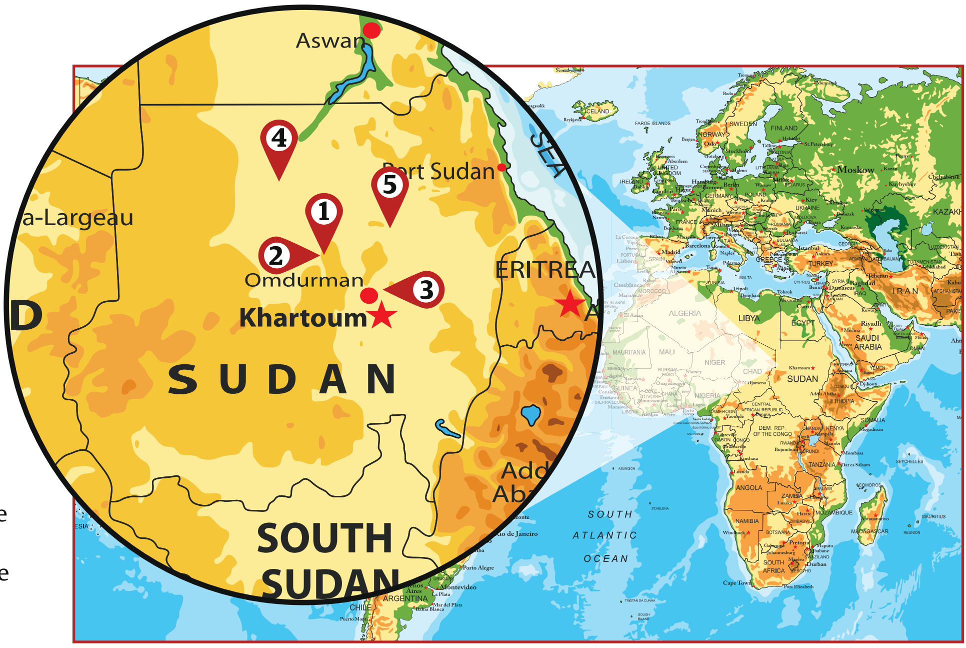
KUSH ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Often overlooked in favour of Egypt, we uncover the Kingdom of Kush's wonders

① JEBEL BARKAL AND THE TEMPLE OF AMUN

KARIMA, SUDAN

Located in the Nubia region of Sudan, this site is part of a wider area of sacred religious grounds whose traditions were taken on by the Second Kingdom of Kush. Jebel Barkal is a mountain on the outskirts of the city of Karima, and after the discovery of the mountain, the Ancient Egyptians came to believe that the God Amun lived inside of it, with it eventually becoming an important religious centre. The Egyptians believed that Amun had claimed them as his 'bodily sons' to justify their rule over the Nubians. After Egypt's fall, the Kingdom of Kush carried on these beliefs and made the area their capital. At the base of this mountain stood the Temple of Amun, which the Kushites heavily renovated to demonstrate their status as the heirs of Egypt and worshipers of Amun. Today the temple is in ruins on the outskirts of the town of Karima, but visitors can walk around and explore its ruins and climb Jebel Barkal.



© Getty Images

View of the remains of the Temple of Amun at the foot of Jebel Barkal

Jebel Barkal, the home of the god Amun from the front of the Temple of Amun

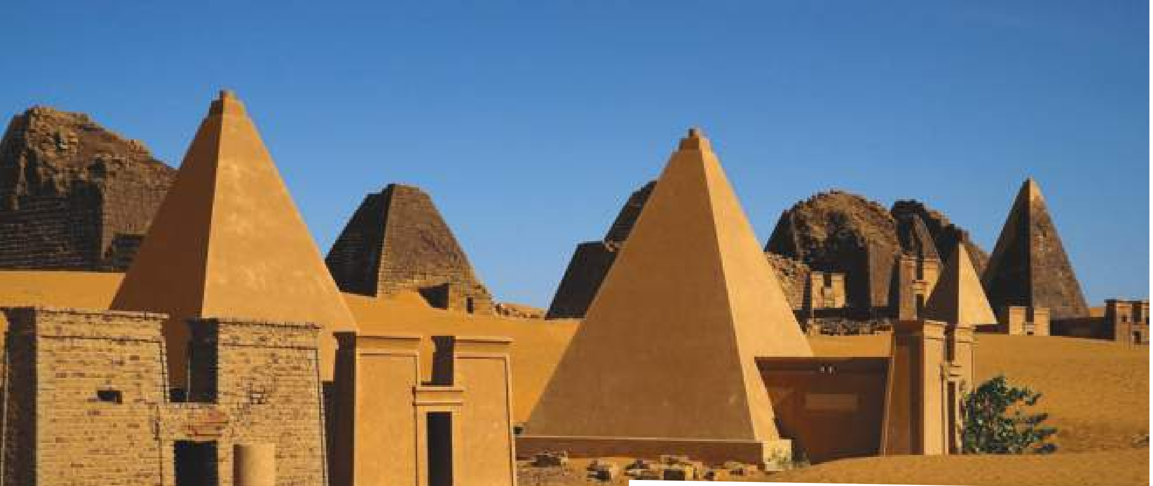
② NAPATAN PYRAMIDS

SAMAREIT AND KARIMA, SUDAN

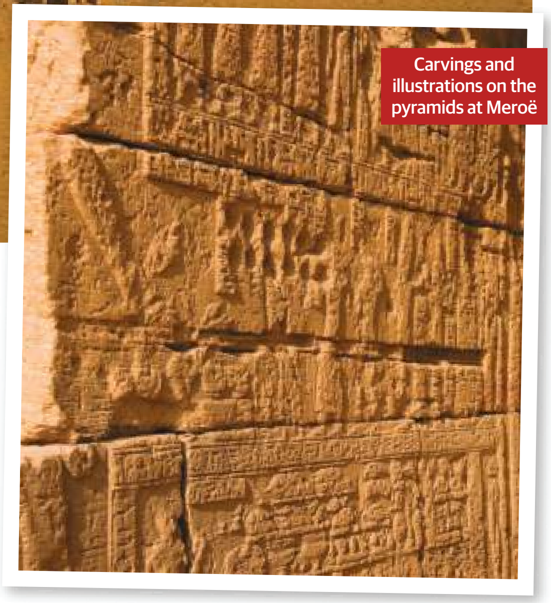
Napata was the second capital of the Kushite Kingdom having taken over the area after Egypt's fall and proclaimed themselves the 25th Egyptian dynasty. The Kushite rulers were buried in the Valley of the Nile, initially, in ornate tombs, then transitioning to being buried within tumuli or earth mounds, to being covered by pyramids. The number of pyramids in this region and across Sudan (with a total of over 200) makes it the country with the most pyramids. The oldest of these burial sites is at Kurru just south of Jebel Barkal, where centuries of Kushite rulers were buried. Their tombs and pyramids featured Egyptian art of the Kushites' transition into the afterlife. In the 600s BCE the important Kushite king, Taharqo, moved the royal cemetery across the river to Nuri. Today, these pyramids are on the outskirts of the towns of Samareit and Karima on the edge of the desert and have been damaged across the centuries, but visitors can get very close to the pyramids.

A Kushite tumuli grave with a Kushite pyramid at the Kurru burial site

The Kushite pyramids at Nuri, some more weathered than others



The Kushite pyramids at Meroë with their funerary chapels

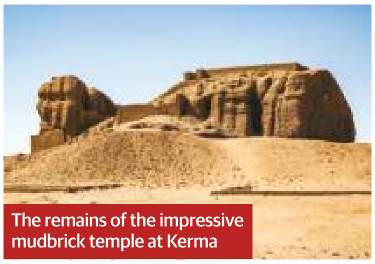


Carvings and illustrations on the pyramids at Meroë

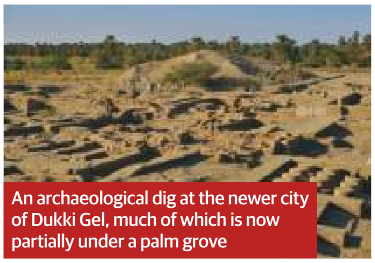
3 ISLAND OF MEROË

KABUSHIYA, SUDAN

In the desert on the edge of the town of Kabushiya, just off the Nile lies the ancient Kushite third capital of Meroë. The seat of the kingdom moved south to Meroë from Napata in around 590 BCE, and it became an impressive walled city with elaborate palaces and temples dedicated to the gods, including Amun. Many of these wonders have disappeared or fallen into ruin. Meroë was an important site for the Kushites as it provided them with access to the trade routes of the Red Sea and natural resources. Just outside the city, on the edge of the desert, lies its royal burial ground. The pyramids are built in the typical steep Kushite shape, with a funerary chapel on their east side. Today there is a small visitor centre before you start the walk toward and around the pyramids, which includes more information on this site and other surrounding sites and safeguards the historical significance of the areas.



The remains of the impressive mudbrick temple at Kerma



An archaeological dig at the newer city of Dukki Gel, much of which is now partially under a palm grove

4 KERMA AND DUKKI GEL

KERMA, SUDAN

Further upriver from later Kushite sites lies its first capital, Kerma. Before becoming the Kingdom of Kush, the Kushites ruled over the Kingdom of Kerma, named for its capital city which was at the centre of the kingdom. As the kingdom grew, Kerma evolved into a large, ornate, and sophisticated walled city of between 2,000 and 10,000 people. As this kingdom expanded and took on new territories it morphed into the Kingdom of Kush, the name by which the Egyptians referred to them. As the kingdom continued to grow it became an important political player in the region, competing with Egypt. The city had sophisticated mudbrick conical temples and halls, as well as nearly 30,000 tombs and tumuli. However, after Egyptian expansion, the city fell, and the Kingdom of Kush moved deeper into the Nubian region. In place of the razed city, the Egyptians established the new city of Dukki Gel, which grew into an impressive ceremonial city with circular and oval buildings and temples, which were, along with the city, later destroyed in Egypt's conflict of expansion in the 1400s BC. However, after the Kush conquered Egypt and became the 25th Dynasty the religious nature of the site was maintained. Today, little remains of the two cities. There is a museum on site which tells their story and provides tours of what remains.

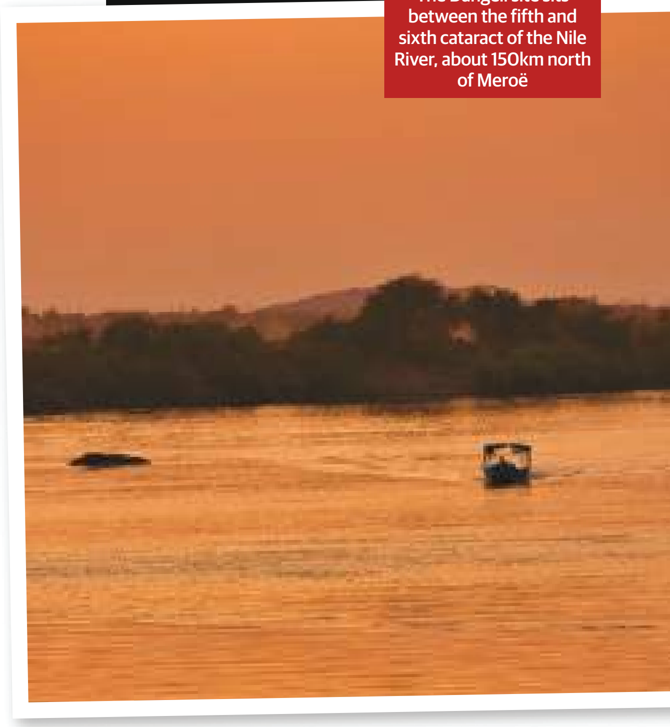
5 DANGEIL

DANGEIL TOWN, SUDAN

Further up the Nile from Meroë lies the Kushite village of Dangeil. This village is subject to an ongoing archaeological project led by The Berber-Abidiya Archaeological Project, Dangeil Sudan, which will stretch to 2026, with work beginning back in 2000. This project has found a well-preserved round temple dedicated to Amun, fragments of statues of Napatan Kushite kings, and preserved offerings to Amun.

Little is known about the history of the site, but it is thought that it was of religious significance due to the temple, and strategic importance as it straddled key trade routes. In Dangeil's history several temples were built, stretching from the Napatan era, to the Meroitic era when the capital was at Meroë, up until the destruction of the temple in a fire in the 1st century CE. There was also a cemetery and fortress on site, built after the Meroitic period.

Evidence suggests that Dangeil was the administrative capital of its region, and substantial gold mines helped finance the kingdom. Today the site is at the centre of the Sudanese town of Dangeil, and plans are afoot to create a museum for visitors to learn about the site, and to provide archaeologists access in order to conduct research into the history of this Kushite village.



The Dangeil site sits between the fifth and sixth cataract of the Nile River, about 150km north of Meroë

All images © Alamy, © Getty Images, © Shutterstock

SPECIAL EDITION SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

SUBSCRIBE AND GET 2 FREE BOOKS

WORTH £20.98
NEW
HISTORY of WITCHCRAFT
Uncovering the truth behind the trials
TALES OF TERROR & MADNESS FROM SALEM VILLAGE
THE EVIDENCE
NEW
The essential guide to
Green Witchcraft
Attune yourself to Mother Nature
Health, happiness & herbal healing
Garden with the Moon
tap into Earth Energy
Meditation guides & rituals to connect you to our planet's heart
embrace Plant Power
CRYSTAL MAGIC + KITCHEN WITCHERY + SPELLS & CHARMS & MORE

ALL ABOUT HISTORY | Subscription offer

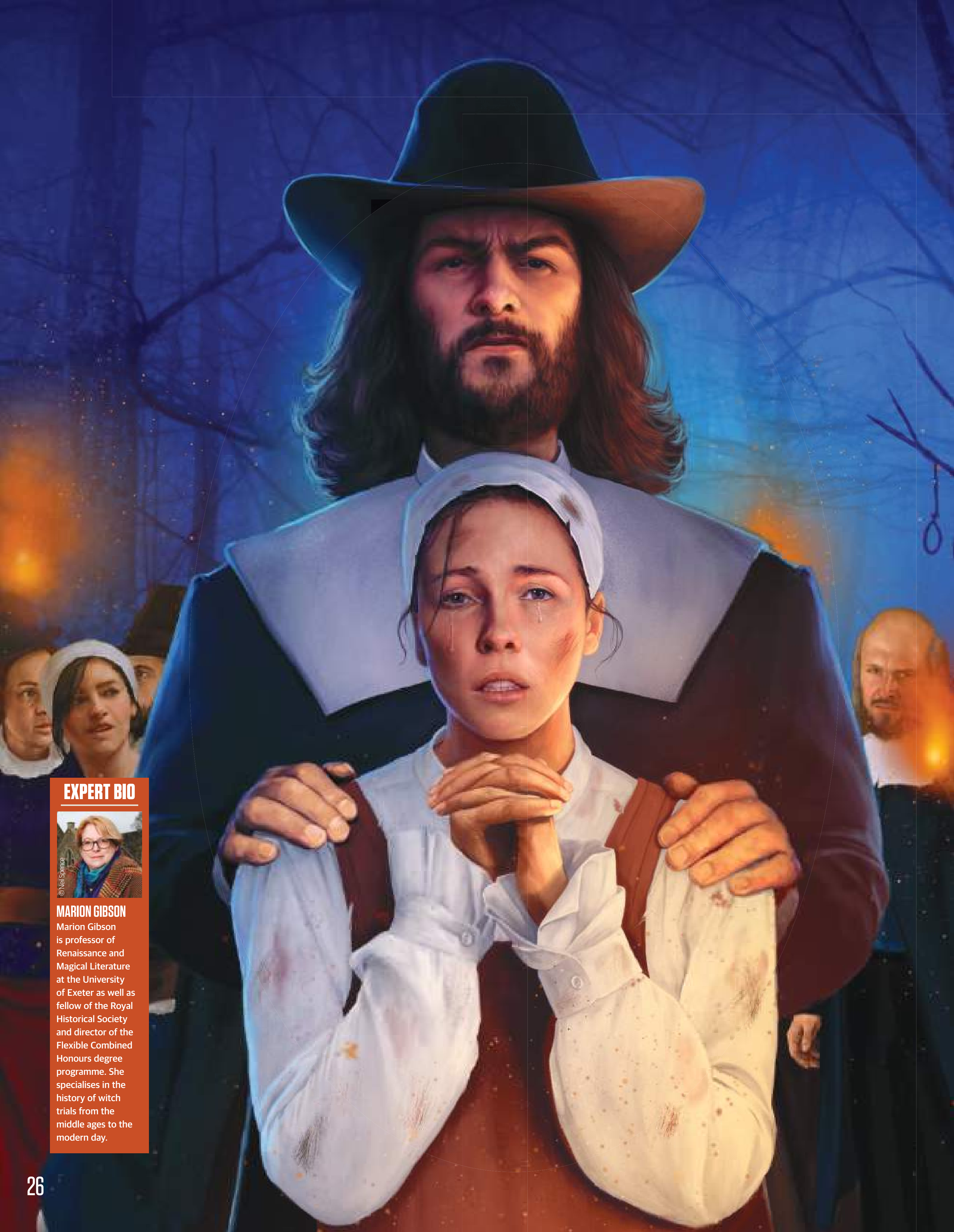
ALL ABOUT HISTORY
Rise of the MONGOLS
How Genghis Khan forged an empire that sought to span the world
MYSTERY OF MI6'S MISSING SPY
SECRETS OF ANCIENT CULTS
THE OTHER SAS
BLACK PRINCE OF FLORENCE
SALEM
How fear, fanaticism and vengeance fuelled the brutal witch trials
ANCIENT ROYAL SCANDALS
RIVALS OF EGYPT
MUSIC PIONEER
PANDEMIC & PREJUDICE
BATTLE OF SHIPKA PASS
COMPUTERS
Elizabeth's Nemesis
The woman who challenged a Tudor queen
GODS OF EGYPT
GOLDEN AGE OF SMUGGLING
The crime wave that gripped the English coast

REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE…

- Two free books: All About History: Book of Witchcraft The Essential Guide to Green Witchcraft
- Brilliant value - save on the cover price
- A monthly fix of entertaining tales of the past, in-depth features and expert storytelling
- Never miss an issue, delivered straight to your door

TO ORDER ONLINE VISIT
www.magazinesdirect.com/AAH135
OR CALL 0330 333 1113 AND QUOTE **XE89**

***Terms and conditions:** Offer closes 31st January 2024. Offer open to new UK subscribers only. Pay only £21.99 every 6 months, saving 40% on the cover price. We will notify you in advance of any price changes. All gift subscriptions will start with the first available issue on-sale after December 2023. If you would like your gift subscription to start with an earlier issue, you can choose an earlier issue when ordering or you can contact customer services. Orders purchased for yourself will start with the next available issue - please allow up to 6 weeks for delivery. Payment is non-refundable after the 14 day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. For full terms and conditions, visit www.magazinesdirect.com/terms. For enquiries please call: +44 (0)330 333 1113. Lines are open Monday-Friday, 8:30am-7pm, and Saturday, 10am-3pm GMT (excluding Bank Holidays) or e-mail: help@magazinesdirect.com. Calls from the UK to 0330 numbers will be charged at no more than a national landline call, and may be included in your phone provider's call bundle. Gifts only available to new subscribers on the UK mainland. Your gift will be delivered separately within 60 days after your first payment has cleared. This offer is not available on overseas or digital subscriptions. In the unlikely event that we run out of this gift, we promise to offer you an alternative gift of the same or greater value.



EXPERT BIO

© Neil Spence

MARION GIBSON

Marion Gibson is professor of Renaissance and Magical Literature at the University of Exeter as well as fellow of the Royal Historical Society and director of the Flexible Combined Honours degree programme. She specialises in the history of witch trials from the middle ages to the modern day.

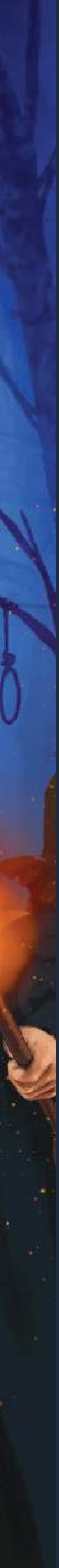


Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

SALEM

How fear, fanaticism and vengeance fuelled the brutal witch trials

Written by Marion Gibson

The winter of 1691-1692 was a long, hard one in Massachusetts. Fevers and colds swept through the communities of European settlers who had colonised North America's eastern coastal strip during the past 50 years. As snow piled up in drifts, the settlers were isolated and confined. Many were Puritans - religious fundamentalists who had fled from England to build an ideal godly society in America - and they had few permitted pleasures. For most of them, the only allowable entertainment was going to church to pray and hear sermons preached by their ministers, and this was a duty rather than fun. It was in these circumstances that in February 1692 two girls living in the house of the Salem Village church's minister Samuel Parris began to suffer fits, their bodies cramping and distorting painfully. The girls were Samuel's niece Abigail Williams, aged eleven, and his daughter Betty Parris, aged nine.

Salem in the 1690s was a difficult time and place to be a child. Games and social contacts were strictly policed. Children were expected to be silent and pious, focused on studying God's word as it appeared in the Bible rather than on play or other kinds of learning. Girls often received no schooling and we know from documents that Abigail Williams could not even write her own name: she had to sign with a mark. Already suppressed and resentful, Abigail and Betty also knew food and firewood were running short, and wars were raging between colonists and Native American people to the north. Some of their friends - perhaps even Abigail herself, an apparent orphan - were refugees from that war. The parsonage house where Abigail and Betty lived ▶

"TWO GIRLS BEGAN TO SUFFER FITS, THEIR BODIES CRAMPING AND DISTORTING PAINFULLY"

HOW TO BE ACCUSED OF WITCHCRAFT

6 easy steps to being on the wrong side of a pitchfork

☐ BE CHILDLESS

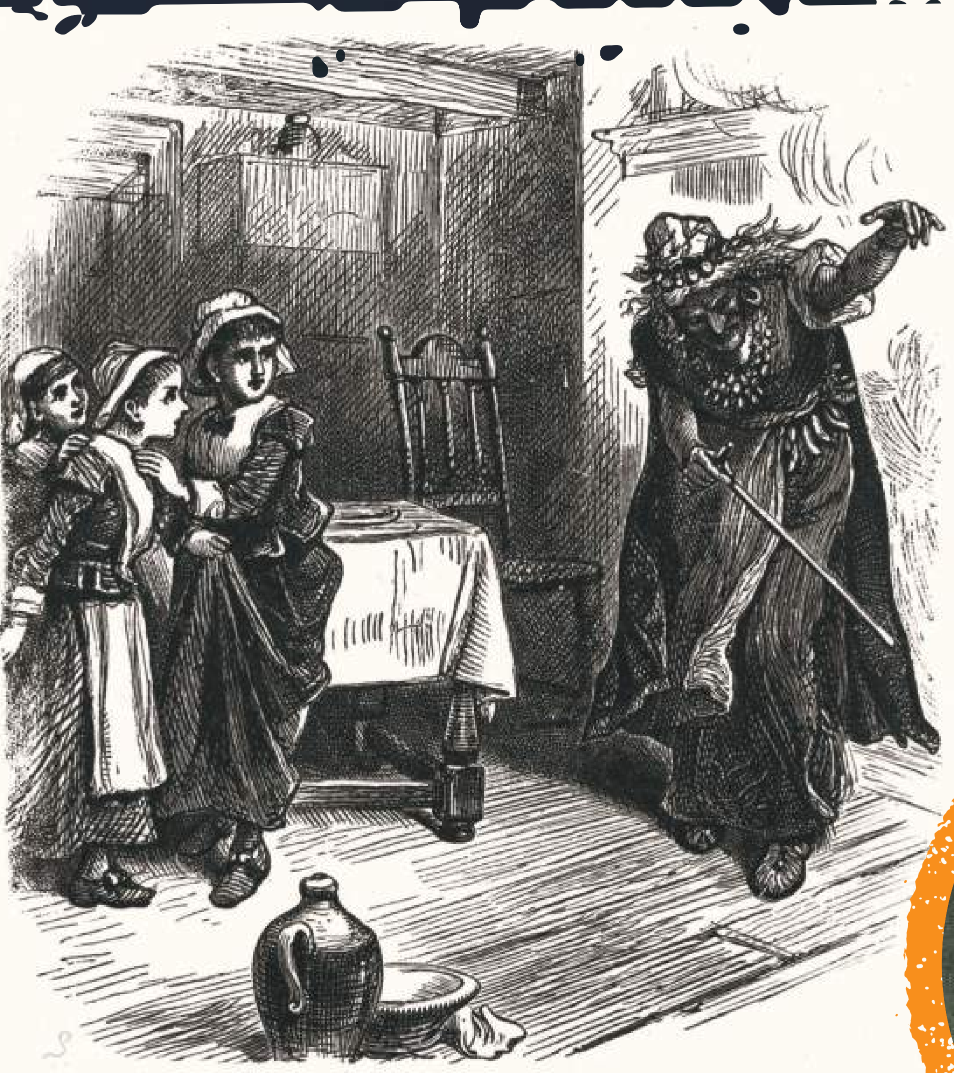
As with the Salem witch trials, it was not uncommon for child illness to be blamed on occult activity. And when it came to issues involving children, women in the community who had none for whatever reason were often the first accused. The supposed logic was that such women were jealous and wanted mothers to suffer.

☐ BE LEFT HANDED

It might not put you in the dock, but being left handed would certainly put some suspicion on you. Sometimes known as a 'mark of the devil', being seen to use your left hand for common tasks could get you some unwanted attention, not just in the era of witch hunts in Europe and North America, but going back further too.

☐ BE A WOMAN

In the majority of witch accusations, the accused was a woman. With religious radicals having stronger and stronger prescriptions for the behaviour of women and their role in society, any deviation from this norm was enough to see you ostracised.



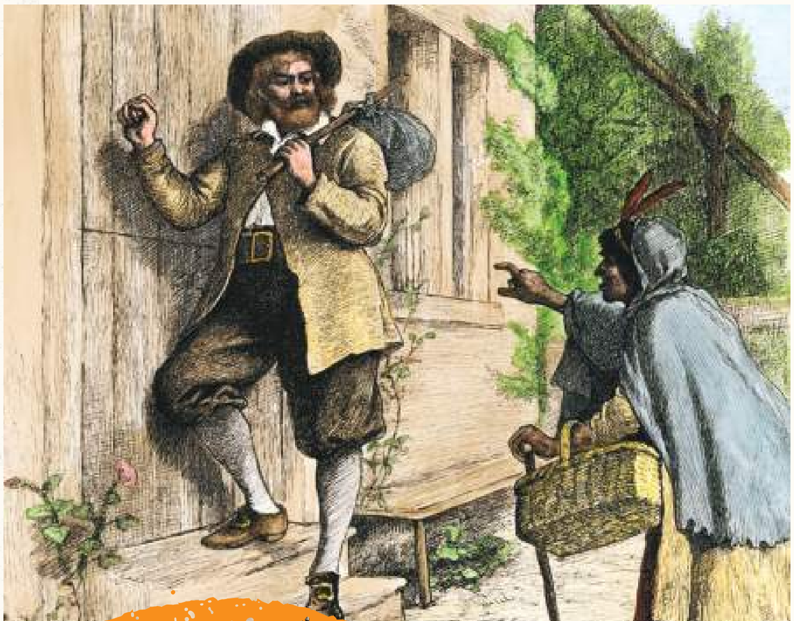
offered no defence against any Native American attack. It was a two-storey wooden box and just as it let in the cold and damp, so it also lay open to killers wielding knives and guns. It was the kind of scenario to cause nightmares and it would not be surprising if by February 1692 Abigail and Betty were tired, bored, hungry and frightened.

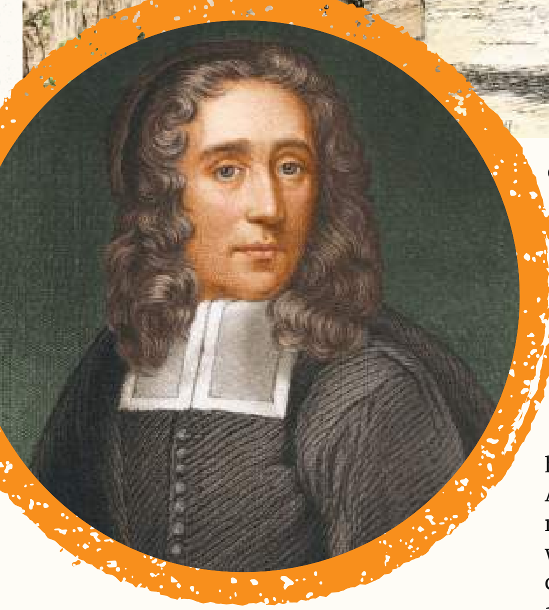
No-one else in their house was happy either. The parsonage had been provided to Samuel Parris when he became minister of Salem Village church, but he complained continually about it and also about the benefits offered by his post. His harsh Puritan piety made him an ideal minister for the fundamentalists in the village, but it also meant conflict with parishioners whose understanding of religion was different and who thought their new minister asked too much in wages and perks. Samuel's family were drawn into those arguments. But the least fortunate inhabitants of the parsonage were two enslaved Native American people, living as servants with the Parris family. They were Tituba and John Indian and shortly after their fits began, Abigail and Betty began to accuse Tituba of causing their illness by witchcraft.

WHO WAS TITUBA?

While later authors - such as Arthur Miller in his famous play *The Crucible* (1953) - often portrayed Tituba as an African-American woman because of her enslavement in the Parris household, she is always described in the documents that survive from her witch trial as "an Indian woman" or "the indgen". It's only recently that historians like Andres Resendez in his book *The Other Slavery* (2016) have started to discuss the enslavement of Native American people alongside African Americans, something that happened from the Caribbean in the south to Maine in the north. Tituba is most likely to have

> "ABIGAIL AND BETTY BEGAN TO ACCUSE TITUBA OF CAUSING THEIR ILLNESS BY WITCHCRAFT"





FAR-LEFT A 19th century illustration supposedly of Tituba, but likely highly inaccurate

LEFT As a slave and a woman of colour, Tituba was in a highly vulnerable position in the community

INSET The Puritan clergyman Increase Mather supported the trials, but did come to question the accuracy of spectral evidence

been one of these slaves. In the 1990s the biographer Elaine Breslaw found the name "Tattuba" among records of enslaved children on the Caribbean island of Barbados in the 1670s. In her 1996 book *Tituba, Reluctant Witch Of Salem*, she concluded this person became Salem's "Tituba". Samuel Parris lived in Bridgetown, Barbados at that time, and owned land near the plantation on which Tattuba was enslaved. It's very likely that Samuel bought Tattuba there when she was sold in 1676 and over time her name morphed into Tituba. In the Salem records, it is also spelt Titiba, Tittapa, Titibe, Tittube, Tetaby and Tatabe.

Responding to the description of Tituba as an "Indian", Breslaw suggests Tituba was an Arawak indigenous person from the South American mainland, a frequent former home of enslaved people in Barbados. She suggests this because of similarities of Tituba's name with the Arawak language, especially a tribal name, Tetebetana. Like around 12,000 other Native Americans in United States history, Tituba and John were held captive, forced to labour for people who despised and feared them. Tituba would have travelled north with Samuel Parris when he left Barbados in 1680, settling in Boston and then Salem. But despite her South American origin, to Betty and Abigail she and John Indian must have recalled the Native American people whom adults told them were killing colonist children like them in the war just a few hundred miles north.

THE ILLNESS

It's possible that Abigail and Betty faked the fits they suffered in February 1692 in order to gain attention, extra food and kindness. In some other cases, fakery was proved to the satisfaction of investigators and children were forced to apologise to those they had accused, assuming they had survived their trials. But it's also possible the two Salem girls were genuinely terrified - afraid of the stern and dissatisfied Samuel Parris, of the captive and maltreated Tituba and John, of the snow and food shortages, of damnation and of the wrath of God. They may have developed a 'psychosomatic' condition, where their frightened minds inflicted real symptoms on their bodies such as hypertension, muscle cramps and panic attacks - a type of emotional illness ▶

☐ HAVE AN AFFAIR

Many medieval texts that warned how to spot a witch involved sex. Women thought to be engaging in sexual relationships outside of marriage or having an affair could quickly see judgement turn to accusation. Likewise, ending a relationship could see a jilted lover send for a witchfinder.

☐ BE OUTSPOKEN

In the age of witch hysteria, just having an opinion or challenging authority in any way could see you accused of dark arts and devil worship. Get on the wrong side of a powerful man in the community, trying to stand up for yourself and such 'unladylike' behaviour would lead to further investigations of your conduct.

☐ BE RELATED TO A 'WITCH'

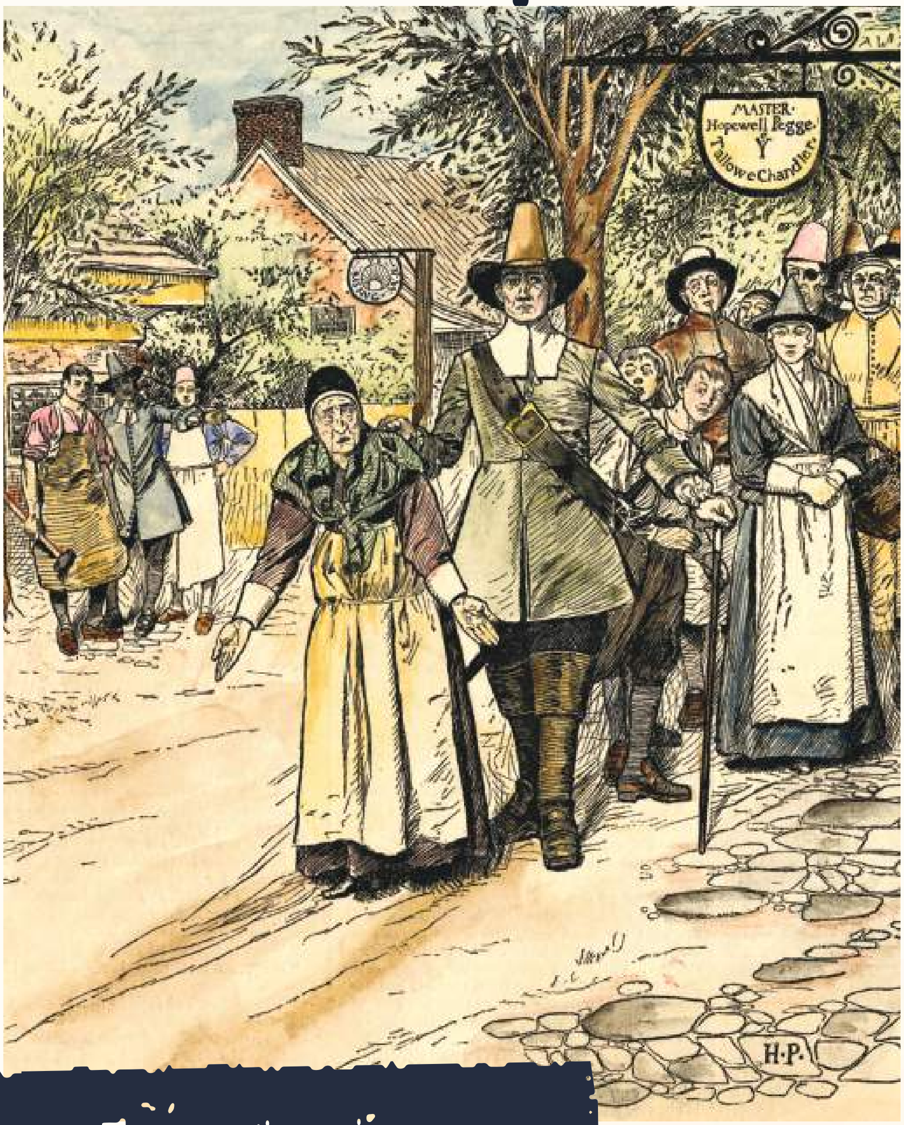
Strictly speaking, you didn't even have to do anything yourself to be considered a witch. If someone you knew, particularly a family member, was accused then you might well find yourself guilty by association. Several of the accused of Salem, including four-year-old Dorothy Good, were tried due to this thinking.

All images © Alamy, © Getty Images

first described by the Harvard doctor Paul MacLean in 1949. Whatever their psychological state, once they had accused Tituba of bewitching them they started accusing other people too.

As February turned into March, Abigail and Betty firmed up their accusations in formal complaints to Samuel Parris and Salem Village's magistrates. They blamed Tituba, but also Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne, two white colonist women who lived nearby. As well as straightforward accusations that these three women had bewitched them, Abigail and Betty also said they saw 'apparitions' of the accused - by which they meant they saw visions of ghost-like spectres in the likenesses of Tituba and the two Sarahs. These spectres had come into their rooms and attacked them magically, they claimed, conversing with them at length and tempting them to commit sins. No-one else could see the spectres, but the people of Salem - devout Christians who believed fervently in supernatural entities like devils and angels - were willing to accept they were real.

Intrigued by the idea of spectral attack, visiting Puritan minister Increase Mather was called in to observe the apparitions. He explained in his book *A Further Account of the Tryals of the New England Witches* (1692) how when he was in the parsonage watching the fits of Abigail Williams, she cried out that she saw the apparition of "Goodwife. N.", shouting in



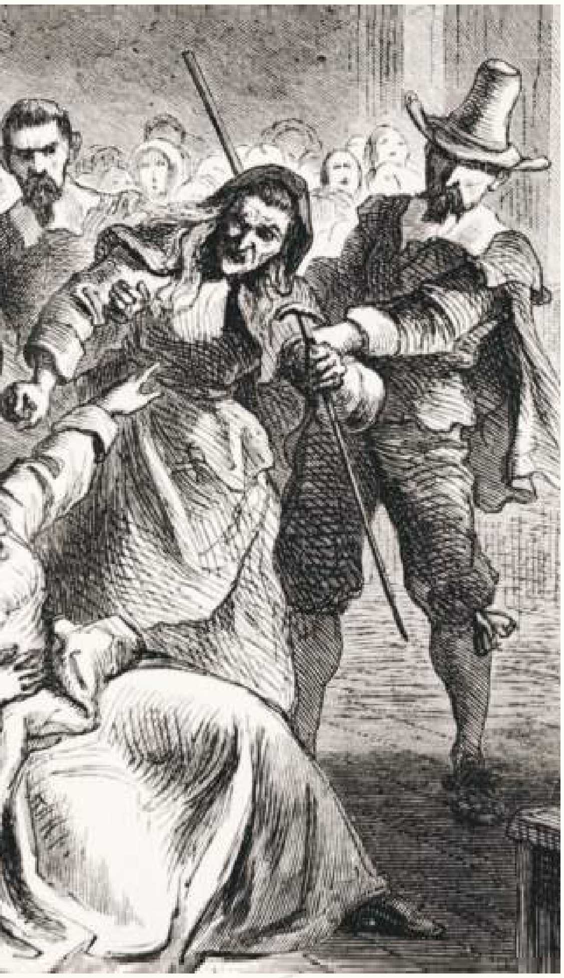
FATE OF THE ACCUSERS

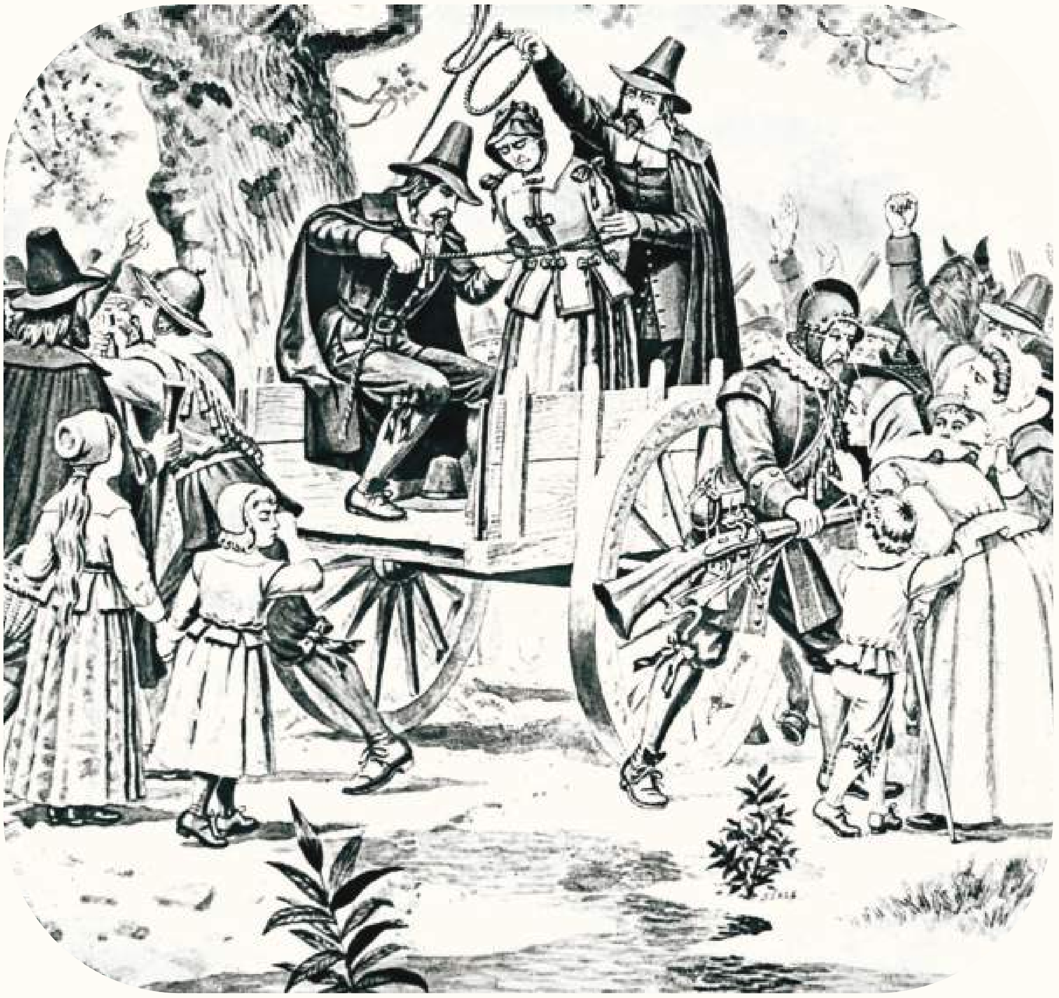
How did the girls themselves react to events?

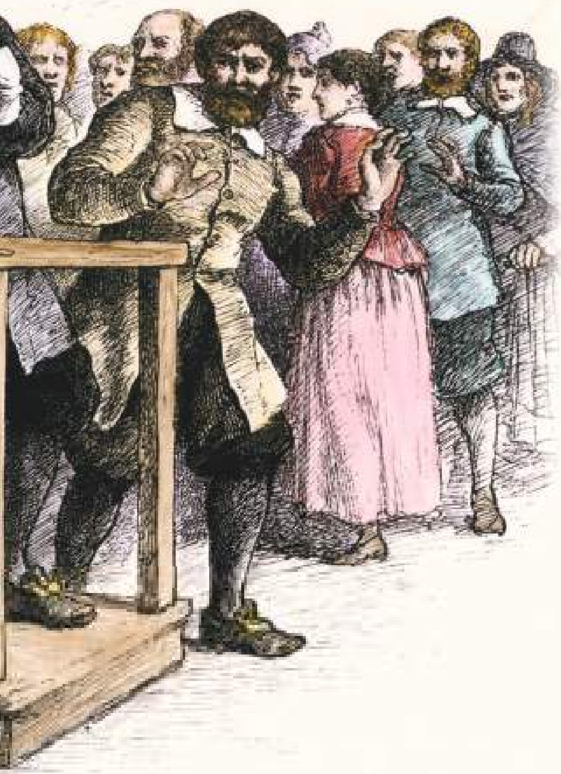
Over 50 per cent of the girls and young women who made accusations at Salem in 1692 seem to have put the past behind them, marrying and having families of their own. Betty Hubbard moved away, marrying in 1711, Abigail Hobbs likewise married and had children, as did Mary Walcott and Betty Parris.

Ann Putnam Junior was the only one of the girls to not only admit wrongdoing but also beg for forgiveness in 1706. She claimed the devil had tricked her into speaking out falsely against innocent people, and she expressed great remorse for her part in the Salem trials. She died in 1715, unmarried and childless. Susannah Sheldon faced a turbulent future. Moving to Providence, Rhode Island, she was known as a person of 'ill fame', and was warned out of town by the Providence council. Deeply troubled in mind, it is believed that she died, unmarried, by 1697. Mercy Short married, but was later excommunicated for adultery.

Abigail Williams, however, who was one of the initial instigators of the tragic events of 1692, vanished from the historical record. Her fate and whereabouts are unknown to this day.







"STORIES OF WITCH ATTACKS WERE REPEATEDLY TOLD BY PEOPLE ALSO CLAIMING TO SEE VISIONS"

apparent panic "do you not see her? Why there she stands!" Moved by the girls' fear, Mather became convinced that Abigail and Betty's claims were genuine: "their motions in their fits are preternatural," he concluded, meaning that their muscle spasms looked strange, not natural, and so could be caused by witchcraft. "I do believe they [Abigail and Betty] cannot hear at that time," he decided – since the girls appeared to be deaf to anyone other than the apparitions – "yet they do plainly converse with the appearances, as if they did discourse with real persons." It would be easy for children to pretend to hold such conversations – like ones with imaginary friends – but they may also have believed they really saw the women's spectres standing over their sick-beds.

ACCUSATIONS

Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, stories of witch attacks were repeatedly told by people also claiming to see visions of neighbours, ghosts, devils, saints, martyred Christians, the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ and God himself. For example, in the English town of Burton on Trent a century before in 1597, a teenaged Puritan boy named Thomas Darling had said he saw visions of a woman he claimed was bewitching him, as well as angels, devils and a green cat. Perhaps these were fever dreams or hallucinations, or began in this way – if so, they might well take the shape of religious experiences because of the fundamentalist societies in which Thomas Darling, Abigail Williams and Betty Parris all lived. Young people in such communities could gain attention and praise by describing such pious visions, because their elders were always on the lookout for signs that they were especially holy. Seeking approval and filled with anxiety about their own future life on earth and in heaven, children could easily understand and replicate the sort ▶

ABOVE-LEFT Once accusations of witchcraft began, many people started being caught up in the hysteria

ABOVE-MIDDLE Visions and dreams – spectral evidence – were accepted in the trials

ABOVE-RIGHT Bridget Bishop was among the many women accused of witchcraft after the initial claims took root

LEFT Several of the suspected 'witches' would also accuse others of witchcraft

All images © Alamy, © Getty Images

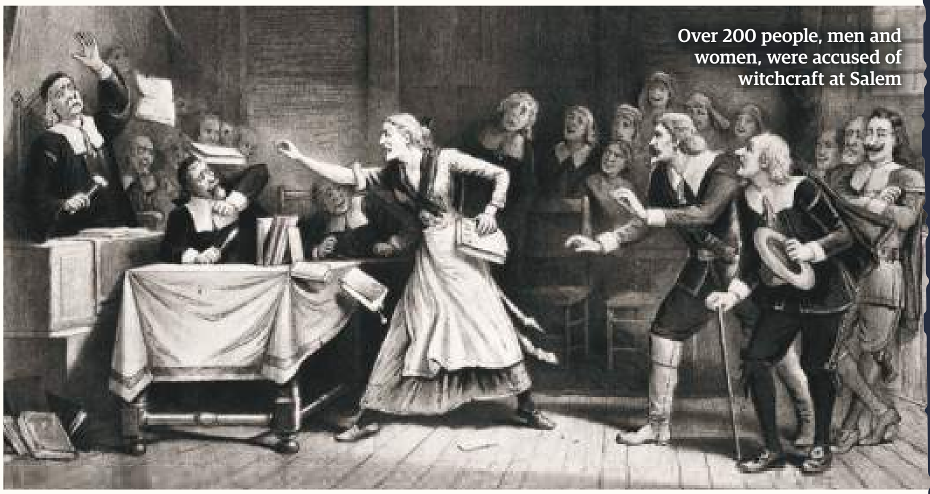
The Burying Point Cemetery at Salem, Massachusetts

of religious visions and experiences that adults sought. Claiming that witches were attacking them marked them as out as God's chosen people.

This may have happened in Salem because soon after Abigail and Betty's visions became public knowledge, other neighbourhood girls – Ann Putnam, Elizabeth Hubbard, Mercy Lewis – began to join them in claiming to see the spectres of witches and accusing a widening range of suspects. Soon those arrested included Bridget Bishop, Rebecca Nurse, Martha and Giles Corey, Martha Carrier, Elizabeth Howe, Abigail and Deliverance Hobbs, Elizabeth and John Proctor and others. About 75 per cent of those accused were women, frequently suspected of witchcraft in male-dominated societies because women were imagined as being credulous and weak, easily open to Satan's temptations just like the Bible's first woman, Eve. It was easy for male clergy and magistrates to suspect a conspiracy of women, gossiping and backstabbing, maybe even libertine and promiscuous since it was thought Satan liked to seduce witches who served him. And as more suspects were arrested in Salem, accusations also spread to surrounding communities – Andover, Ipswich, Beverly – where more people, predominantly women, were accused.

FEAR SPREADS

The people of Salem began a series of fasts and prayer meetings to combat the devil. To test the identities of the witches that were afflicting the girls, one church member, Mary Sibley, also decided to try folk magic. She asked John Indian to bake a 'witch cake', a recipe mixing flour with the urine of suspected victims. The result was fed to a dog, supposedly to carry away the witches' magic. Samuel Parris found out about the witch cake and was appalled. He believed such folk practices were themselves a kind of witchcraft because they did not work by natural, scientific means. On 27 March, he reproved Mary



Over 200 people, men and women, were accused of witchcraft at Salem

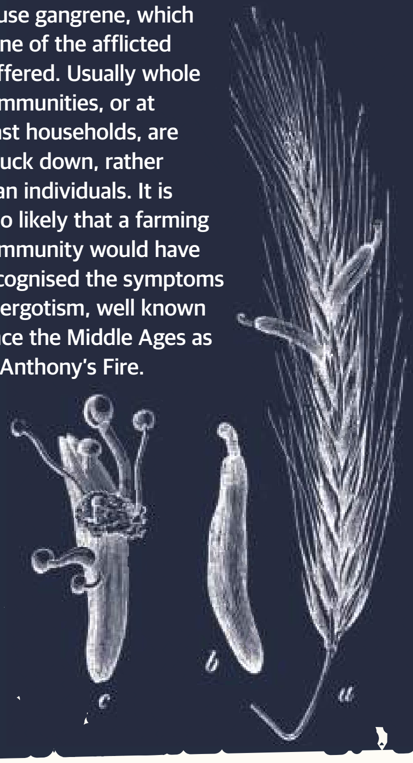
THE POISONING THEORY

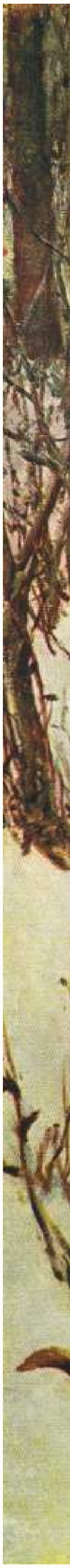
Was a fungus to blame for the mass hysteria?

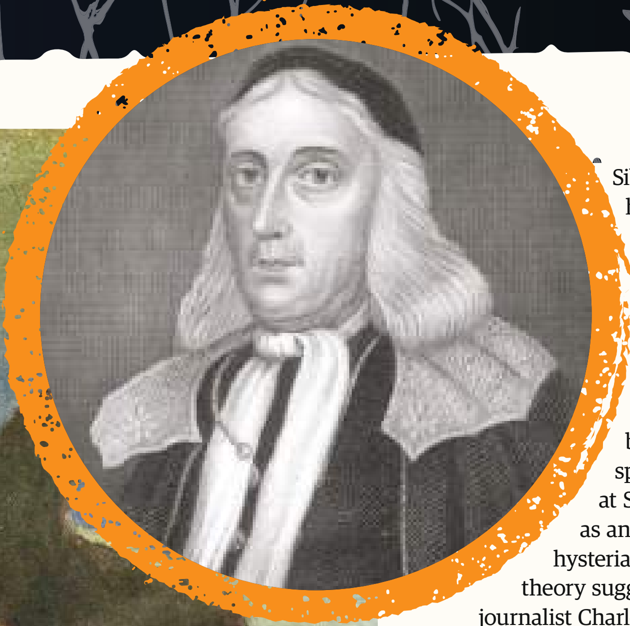
Claviceps purpurea is a fungus that grows on grains like barley and rye. Forming an unsightly mass on the grain, it is usually discarded during harvest. If it finds its way into food, however, it causes a terrifying condition known as ergotism; there are some who think that the start of the Salem witch hysteria may have been caused by this fungus.

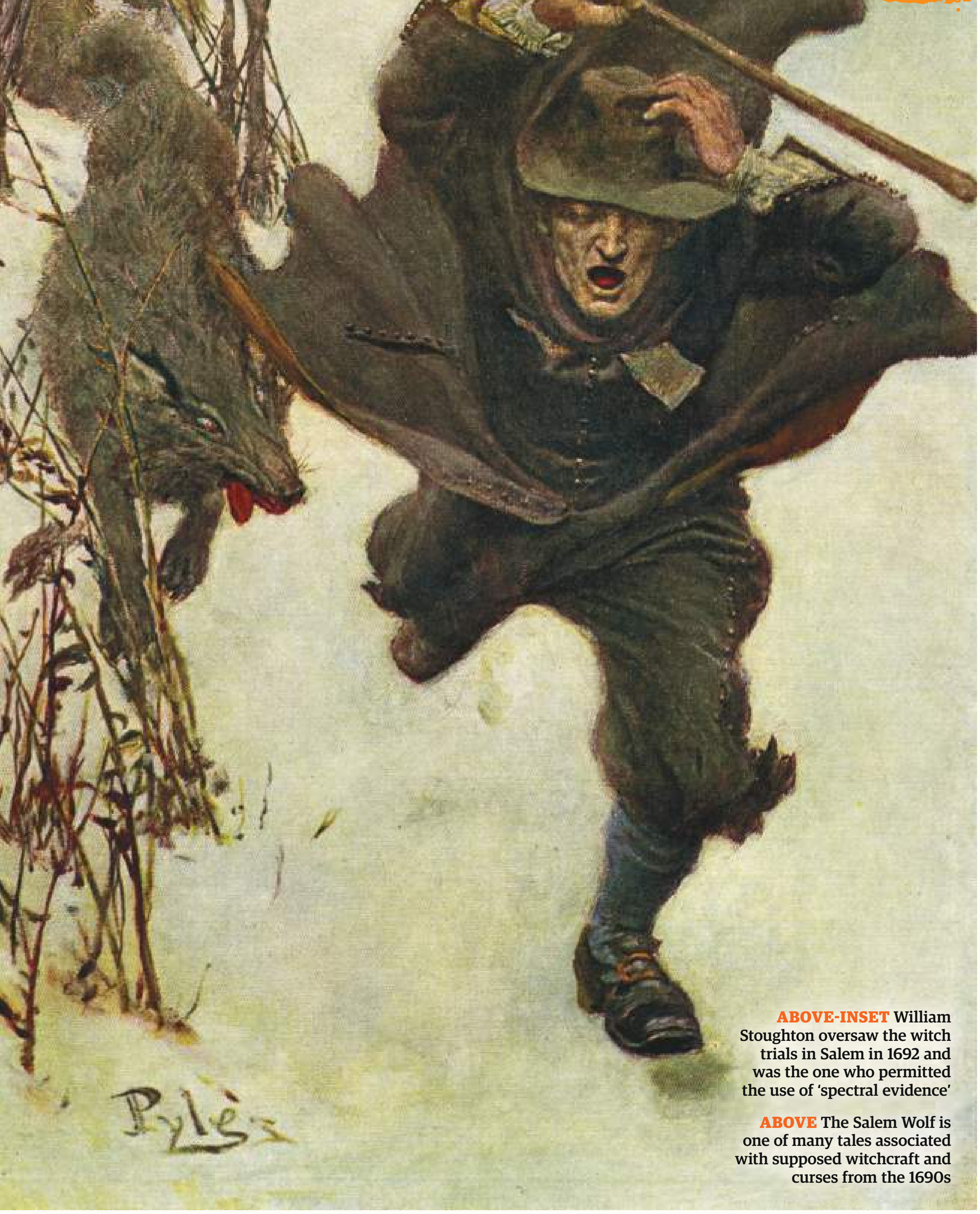
The fungus that causes ergotism grows best after a cold winter, such as that experienced by Salem in 1691, and on swampy land like that owned by Thomas Putnam. With bad weather and poor harvests, farmers are more likely to try and keep as much of their grain as they can, even those infected with ergot. People struck down by ergotism experience convulsions, fits, spasms, and feel pin pricks – all symptoms that the afflicted of Salem would show. Ergotism often produces vivid hallucinations, and young children would be particularly susceptible.

There are problems with the ergotism hypothesis, however. Ergot poisoning can cause gangrene, which none of the afflicted suffered. Usually whole communities, or at least households, are struck down, rather than individuals. It is also likely that a farming community would have recognised the symptoms of ergotism, well known since the Middle Ages as St Anthony's Fire.









ABOVE-INSET William Stoughton oversaw the witch trials in Salem in 1692 and was the one who permitted the use of 'spectral evidence'

ABOVE The Salem Wolf is one of many tales associated with supposed witchcraft and curses from the 1690s

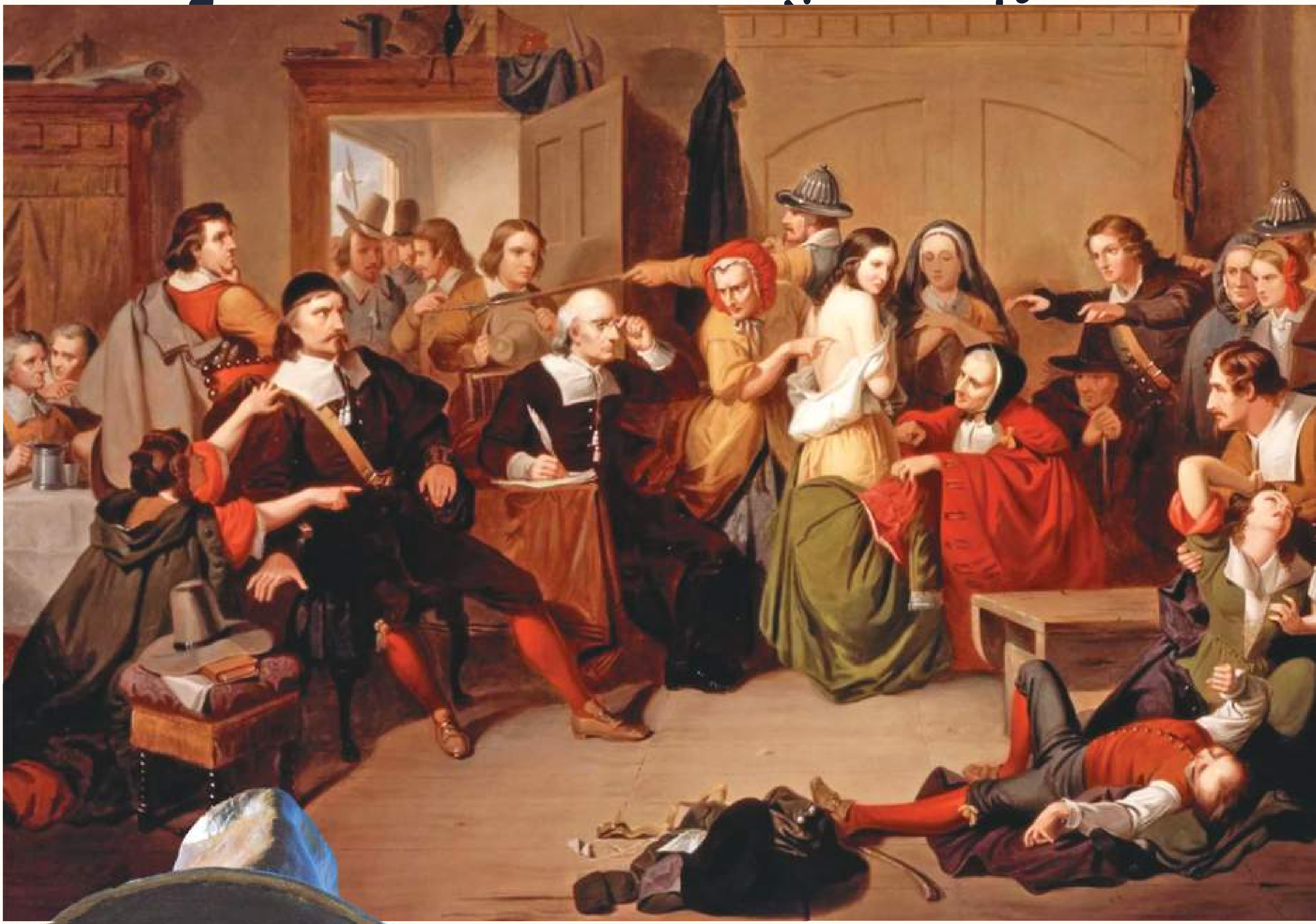
Sibley in church, where he argued that Satan had been let loose in the village because of Mary's witch-like act. Church members reacted with horror and more began to claim they had been bewitched. The spread of accusations at Salem is often cited as an example of mass hysteria or 'witch mania', a theory suggested in 1841 in the journalist Charles Mackay's book *Extraordinary Popular Delusions And The Madness Of Crowds*. What could initially begin as a nightmare or panic attack in a child frightened by witchcraft stories could, in times of religious and social crisis, spread to a whole community.

However, regarding witch trials as evidence of insanity or a specific disease is unhelpful. All of the accusers cannot have been suffering from mental or physical illness, and instead cultural factors seem likely to have driven accusations, working through perceptions about what was possible in the world. From the 1430s onwards witchcraft was believed to be a real phenomenon, one of the worst ways Satan attacked humans. Witch trials began to grow in number and intensity from that time onwards. Satan, it was thought, was always looking for opportunities to assault Christian communities, whether that was in the Alps - where the peak period of witch-hunting began - or the Americas. Firstly, the devil could tempt Christian folk into the sin of becoming a witch: a person who wanted to hurt others by magic and ended up worshipping the devil in order to get the power to do that. Secondly, he could make sure these witches attacked particularly pious people - like the children in minister Samuel Parris's house. Highly religious communities were thus psychologically primed to watch out for assaults by Satan and his witch followers and believe in a large Satanic conspiracy.

> "REGARDING WITCH TRIALS AS EVIDENCE OF INSANITY OR A SPECIFIC DISEASE IS UNHELPFUL"

In particular, Puritans believed that witches agreed a 'covenant' with Satan, ▶

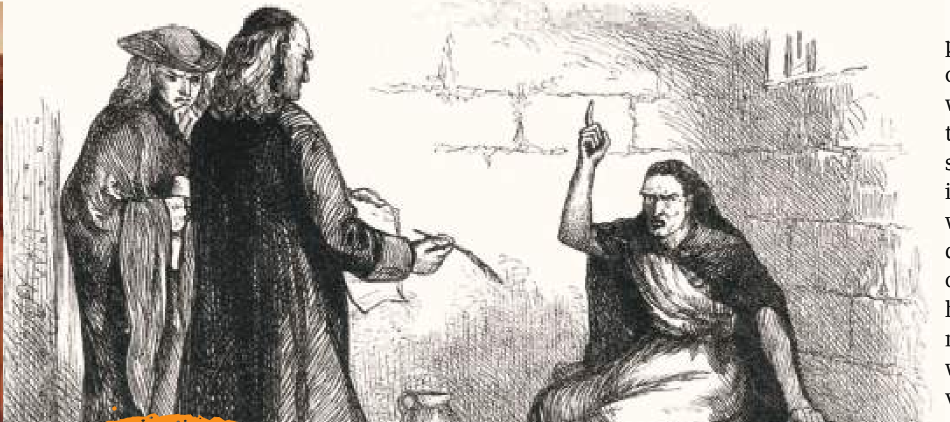
All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images, © Shutterstock



binding them to do his bidding. Puritanical theology demanded that church members made just such a covenant with God, an agreement to obey Biblical laws, try to do good in the world and in return receive the gift of eternal life in heaven. If believers were sufficiently literate, the covenant could be read out from a book and then signed. It was very easy to invert that idea, imagining that because good people covenanted with God, therefore bad people must covenant with Satan. Then, Puritans believed, witches would worship the devil at a "sabbath", another inversion of a Christian term, this time denoting a Judaeo-Christian holy day. Humans have a habit of thinking in opposites – good/bad, black/white, true/false – and the witchcraft belief of Salem's villagers is a classic example of this psychological oversimplification, explored by the historian Stuart Clark in *Thinking With Demons* (1997). With the evidence of their children's strange visions, it was easy for Salem's Puritans to decide Satan's witches were all over their village.

TRIAL AND PUNISHMENT

A court of Oyer and Terminer (to "hear and determine") was commissioned to hear the Salem witchcraft cases. There was little separation of powers between church and state, lower and higher courts. Colonial courts were in any case run by people with little legal training. In most communities a few like-minded people controlled everything, which made witchcraft prosecution relatively easy. Often people with a shared outlook both accused and judged witches, a psychological phenomenon known as 'groupthink', named in 1952 by the sociologist William Whyte. These circumstances did not automatically lead to conviction in court and execution – many American witches were acquitted or punished less severely



BRIDGET BISHOP
HANGED
NE 10 1692

ABOVE-LEFT A young woman is subjected to physical examination as part of her trial

ABOVE-INSET There are a number of memorials placed for the falsely condemned men and women who were victims of the trials

ABOVE-RIGHT Martha Corey was among those found guilty and hanged for witchcraft

LEFT Roger Conant helped to found Salem as well as a number of other communities in Massachusetts

than the law mandated – but it often did. The first person tried, convicted and hanged at Salem was Bridget Bishop, executed on 10 June 1692. Further executions followed on 19 July, 19 August and 22 September. By then 20 people had been killed. Tituba remained in jail: under questioning, she had confessed to witchcraft, even naming other people as fellow witches so that she was a valuable witness. But many of the people she accused were hanged.

> "THE CONFESSIONS OF SALEM'S WITCHCRAFT SUSPECTS CAN BE EXPLAINED BY THE PRESSURE PUT ON THEM"

The minister Cotton Mather spoke at the executions of convicted people to endorse the work of the state court. He explained what he believed to be the witches' guilt to increasingly troubled crowds, who wanted to stop the executions of their relatives and friends. Later, Cotton defended his actions in his book *Wonders Of The Invisible World* (1693). Even after the trials ended, he remained convinced witchcraft was rife and referred to witches in military terms, suggesting a bunker mentality – a term used in politics to describe leaders who feel persecuted and can sometimes use this feeling to justify persecuting others. Colonial Puritans lived in a similar siege state and might easily believe, as Cotton did, that "an army of devils is horribly broke in", over-running their settlement like enemy combatants.

THE CONFESSIONS

Cotton also pointed out that many accused people had "confessed, that they have signed unto a book, which the devil showed them", making a covenant. Like the judges of the Court of Oyer and Terminer, he seems to have been genuinely perplexed that sceptics could doubt these confessions, arguing that "all the rules of understanding human affairs are at an end, if after so many most voluntary harmonious confessions, made by intelligent persons of all ages, in sundry towns, at several times, we must not believe the main strokes wherein these confessions all agree." This meant that the court was right to convict and execute people named in the confessions, he emphasised, because they must really be witches.

Yet the confessions of Salem's witchcraft suspects can be explained by the pressure put on them, as well as the general beliefs of 17th century Puritan society. One woman who was questioned but managed to survive the witch trials later said that she confessed because she was bullied into a false admission of guilt. Not only were the magistrates and judges who questioned her pushing her to the point of breakdown, but the girls who accused her were "mocking of me and spitting in my face, saying they know me to be an old witch and if I would not confess it I should very speedily be hanged," she said. Fatally, during the trials the court authorities decided to break with legal precedent and – at least temporarily – spare people who confessed and apologised, while having those who maintained their innocence executed because they were judged to be unrepentant. This led, of course, to further confessions as suspects put in an impossible position attempted to save their own lives. By this means, suspects like Tituba actually managed to survive the trials – she was freed in 1693. The admissions made by other suspects would now be considered 'forced confessions' by criminal psychologists.

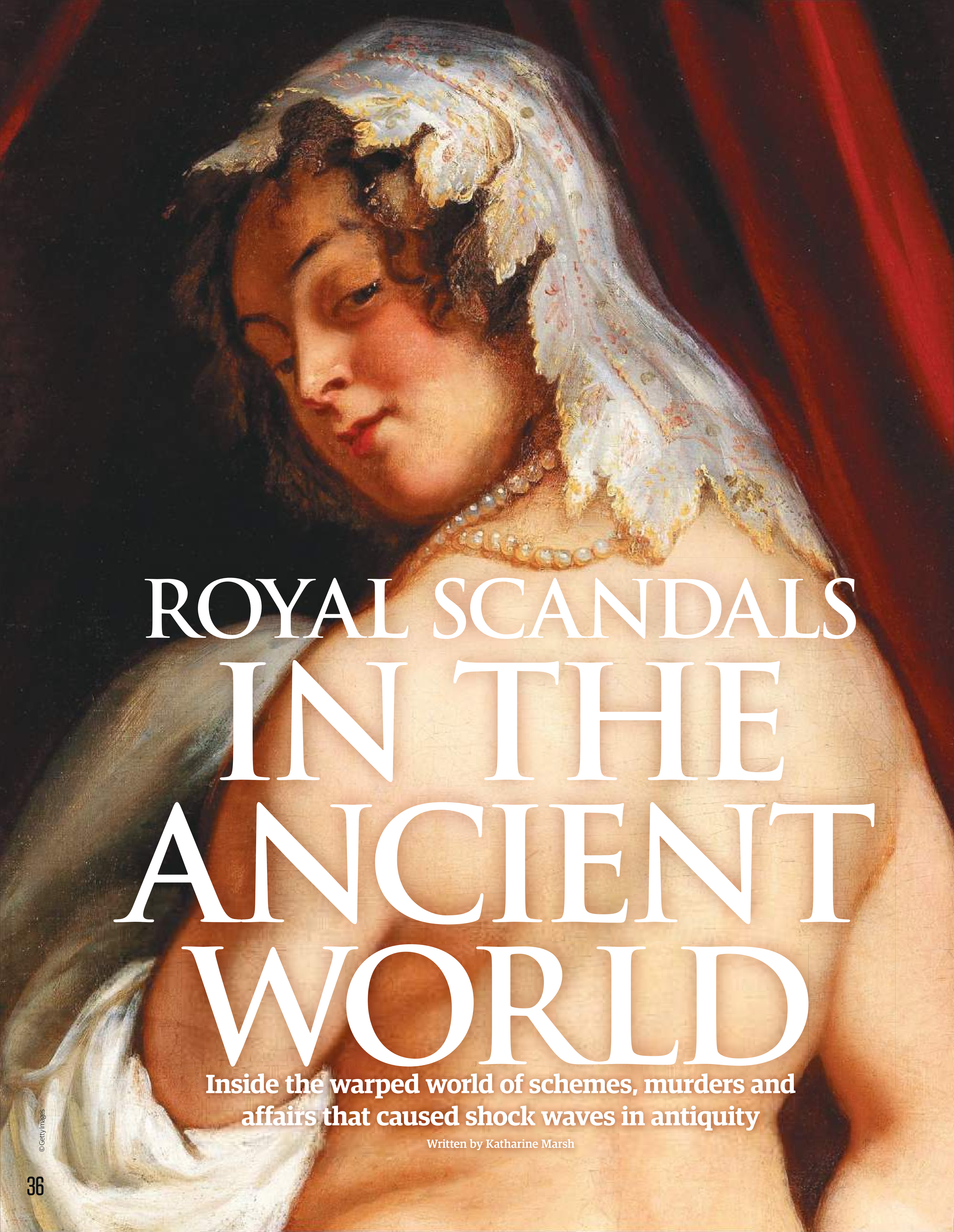
AN ENDING

By 1693 over 200 people had been accused of witchcraft across New England and the court system collapsed. Trials were paused and Salem's Court of Oyer and Terminer was reconstituted as a Superior Court of Judicature. However, it had some of the same personnel, so that while most suspects were now acquitted, some were still convicted. This time, however, they were pardoned by the Massachusetts Governor. The trials ended amid accusations of injustice and the families of those executed or imprisoned were later granted compensation. The phrase "Salem witch trials" is now associated with the psychology of psychosomatic disease, delusion, crowd mentality and groupthink and the episode is often regarded as a historical lesson – one that, unfortunately, we still have to learn fully. ○

MARION GIBSON
Witchc
A HISTORY IN 13

WITCHCRAFT: A HISTORY IN 13 TRIALS BY MARION GIBSON IS OUT NOW (SIMON & SCHUSTER, £20.00)

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images, © Shutterstock



ROYAL SCANDALS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

Inside the warped world of schemes, murders and affairs that caused shock waves in antiquity

Written by Katharine Marsh

© Getty Images

Royal scandals are nothing new – since the beginning of recorded history, society's elites have been embroiled in torrid affairs, caught up in corruption and doing anything they can to gain and stay in power. And in antiquity, things were at times a little more… wild.

In a world where blood sports were major public events, it seems like no one would bat an eye to things like murder and prostitution, but emperors and kings knew how to take things just a bit too far. Family ties often didn't mean much, either. Read on to find out about an emperor who banished his own daughter from the empire, an empress who blinded her son in a desperate bid to keep her crown, and a king so proud of his wife's beauty that he wanted to show her off.

EMPEROR EXILES HIS DAUGHTER FOR ADULTERY

Being in the imperial family was no guarantee of safety, as Julia the Elder found out

2 BCE

Being the daughter of Rome's first emperor was no assurance of safety – and that was something that Julia the Elder learnt the hard way. Her first two marriages, to Marcus Marcellus and Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, had both ended with the men's deaths, so in 12 BCE Julia was forced into a union with her step-brother, Tiberius, the son of Augustus' wife Livia from her first marriage.

It wasn't the happiest of partnerships and rumours swirled around Rome of Julia finding satisfaction and affection elsewhere. When their infant son sadly died in 6 BCE, Tiberius left the city in a voluntary exile, leaving his wife behind. With no husband to hold her back, Julia's appetite became more voracious as her affairs became less secretive. Another problem was Julia's choice of partners. One was Iullus Antonius, the son of the late Mark Antony, her father's former rival for the throne.

A heavy part of Augustus' image to his people and his policies was his perfect family. His wife was loyal and womanly in her pursuits – having a married daughter who was accused of sleeping with half of Rome was a major issue. His first attempt to curb Julia's actions was to threaten her with death, but he ended up exiling her from the city of Rome. She was sent first to Pandataria, an island off Campania, in 2 BCE. Six years later, she was moved to Rhegium, where she remained. When Tiberius, her cuckolded husband, came to the throne, he stopped her allowance. Julia, the daughter and wife of emperors, would die of malnutrition.

Julia the Elder's indiscretions would leave her to die alone and disgraced

Image source: wiki/Didier Descouens

EGYPTIAN PHARAOH'S SECRET COMMONER LOVER?

Hatshepsut was thought to be having a love affair with her daughter's tutor

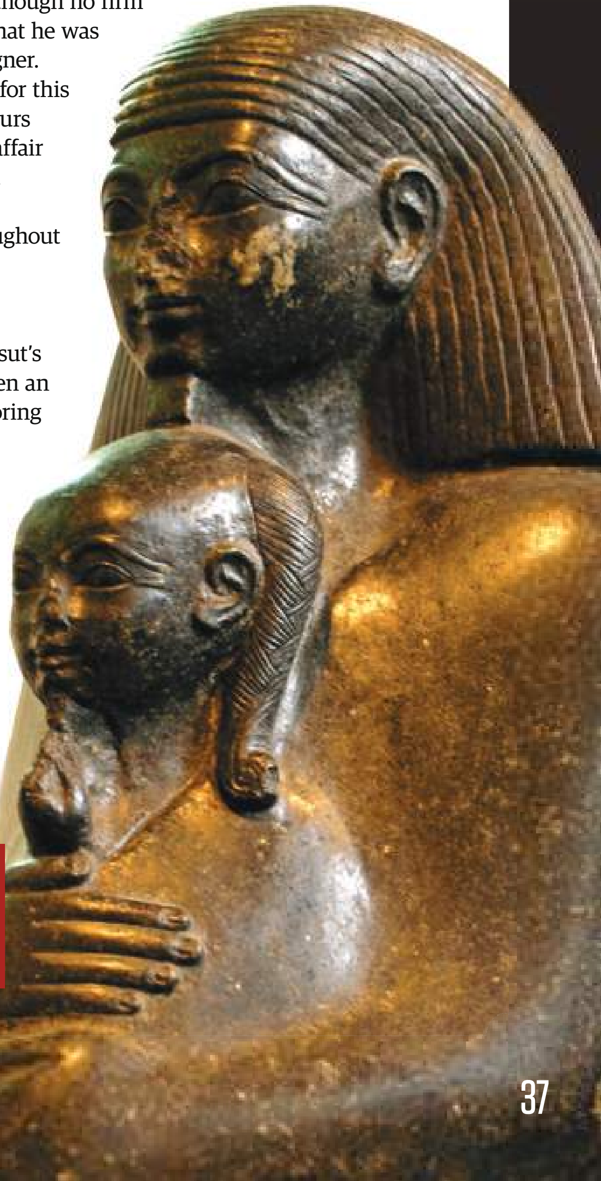
1479-1458 BCE

Hatshepsut has rightfully earned her place in history. One of Egypt's few female pharaohs, she has captured the interest of many – and perhaps also one of her officials.

Senenmut was a commoner who found greatness in Ancient Egypt. Out of all his siblings – two sisters and four brothers, including him – he was the only one to rise through the ranks to high office. It's unclear how Senenmut and Hatshepsut met, but it was likely when Senenmut was appointed tutor and steward of princess Neferure, Hatshepsut's daughter.

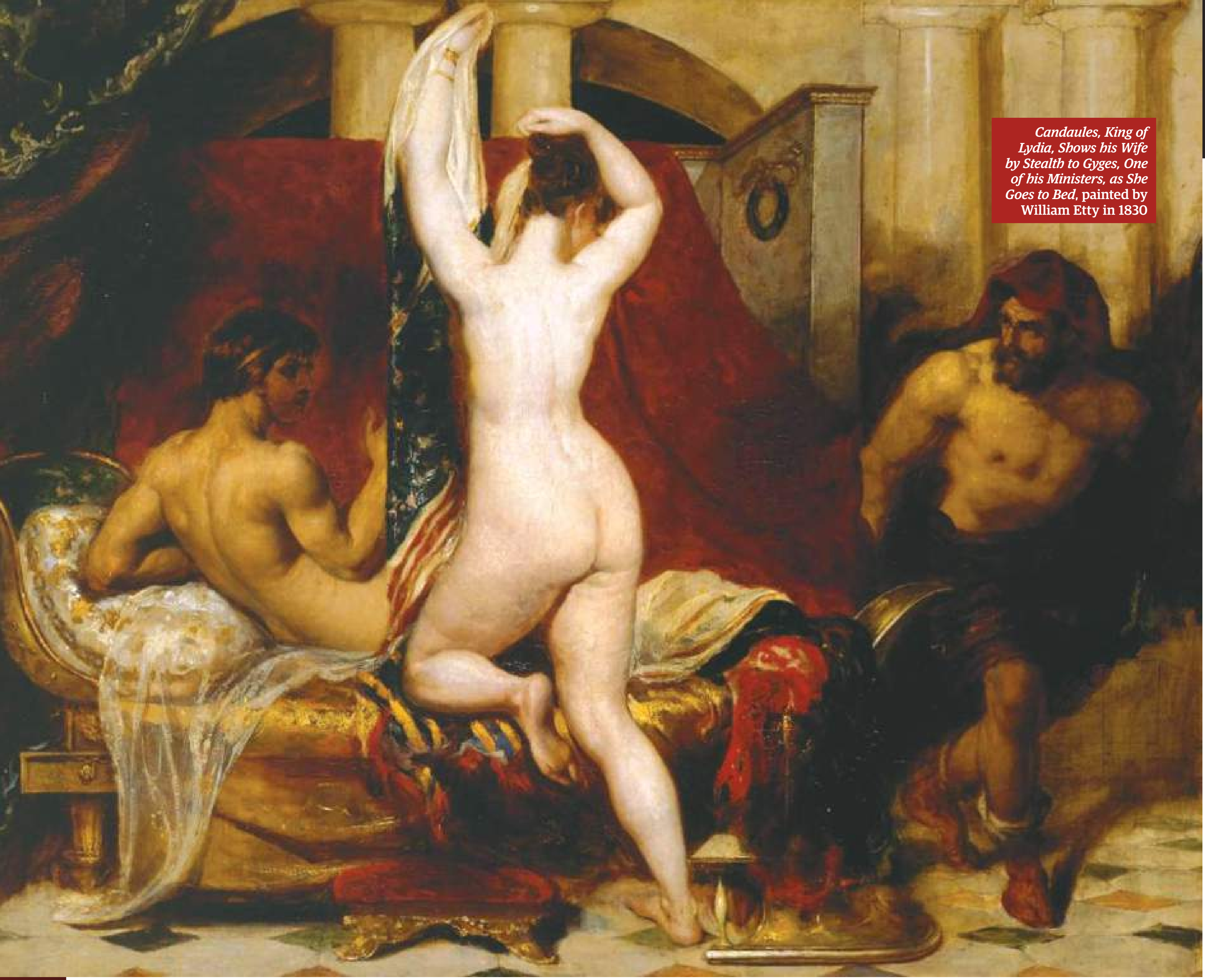
Hatshepsut found herself in possession of the throne when her husband, Tuthmosis II, died. As her power skyrocketed when she acted as regent for her son, Tuthmosis III, Senenmut found himself with more power, too. The tutor became an architect, credited with the design of Djeser-Djeseru, the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut, although no firm evidence exists that he was actually the designer.

Perhaps it was for this reason that rumours spread about an affair between the pair. What has fuelled speculation throughout the centuries are the depictions of Senenmut in so many of Hatshepsut's monuments. When an image of him adoring his pharaoh was found inscribed behind a door jamb in Djeser-Djeseru, its private nature was thought to show the true depth of their personal relationship.



Senenmut holds a young Princess Neferure, who some incorrectly theorised was his daughter

Image source: wiki/Captmondo



Candaules, King of Lydia, Shows his Wife by Stealth to Gyges, One of his Ministers, as She Goes to Bed, painted by William Etty in 1830

THE KING WHO LOVED HIS WIFE FOR HER BEAUTY

King Candaules was more than happy to show off his wife's good looks

7TH CENTURY BCE

King Candaules of Lydia loved his wife, or at the very least, how she looked. Candaules believed his wife – whose name is lost to history – to be the most beautiful woman in the world and he would boast about it to everyone.

On Candaules' staff was a man called Gyges. Depending on which source you read, Gyges was a shepherd who found a ring that made him invisible and used it to kill Candaules and seduce his wife, or he was an army officer already suspected of treachery.

The Lord Of The Rings analogues and corruption aside, it's perhaps Herodotus' take that is arguably more like what happened. Candaules wanted to show his wife off to Gyges, so he effectively ordered him to sneakily watch his wife changing. Of course, no one had factored in what the woman would think of all of this. Gyges was caught by Candaules' wife and, understandably, she was outraged. Her response was one of anger and she forced Gyges on pain of death to kill her husband.

Regardless of the truth of how the story played out, Gyges did come to the Lydian throne as the first of the Mermnad dynasty after assassinating King Candaules. And according to many sources, Candaules' wife was right by his side on the throne.

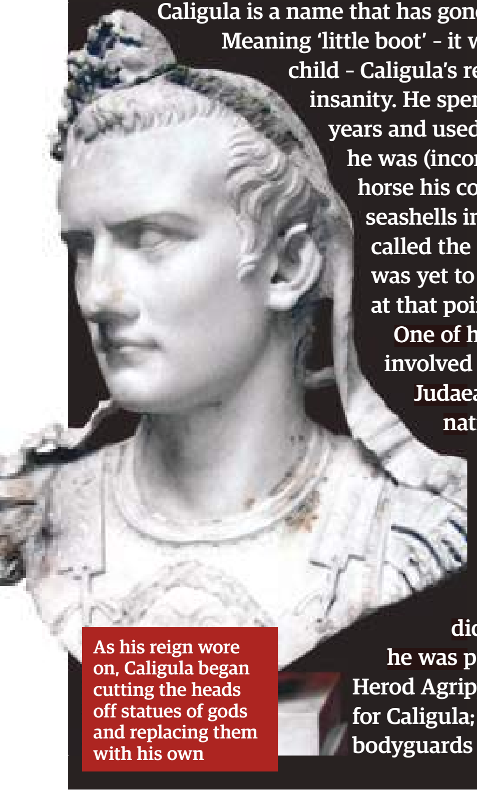
> "CANDAULES WANTED TO SHOW HIS WIFE OFF TO GYGES SO HE EFFECTIVELY ORDERED HIM TO SNEAKILY WATCH HIS WIFE CHANGING"

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

WHEN PRIDE COMES BEFORE A FALL

Caligula is known for his infamously tyrannical rule

37-41 CE



As his reign wore on, Caligula began cutting the heads off statues of gods and replacing them with his own

Image source: wiki/Louis le Grand

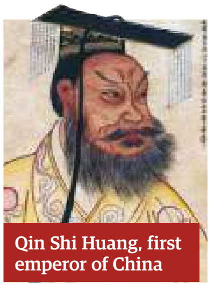
Caligula is a name that has gone down in history for its notoriety. Meaning 'little boot' – it was a nickname given to him as a child – Caligula's reign was one of terror, scandal and insanity. He spent his entire treasury in a matter of years and used extortion to finance his lifestyle, he was (incorrectly) accused of trying to make a horse his consul, and ordered soldiers to collect seashells in northern Gaul, which he then called the spoils of the conquered ocean – he was yet to actually cross the English Channel at that point.

One of his biggest scandals, though, involved religion. According to the Romans, Judaea was a trouble spot. The pesky natives there refused to give up their religion and worship the pagan gods. Caligula didn't care about what they wanted. His plan? To erect a colossal statue of himself in the Temple of Jerusalem, one of the holiest Jewish sites. It didn't go down well, and eventually, he was persuaded to scrap the project by Herod Agrippa. It was the beginning of the end for Caligula; he was assassinated by his own bodyguards less than a year later.

THE TRUE STORY OF A CHINESE EMPEROR'S MOTHER'S LOVER

Meet Queen Zhao's fake eunuch

3RD CENTURY BCE



Qin Shi Huang, first emperor of China

Qin Shi Huang is known as the first emperor of all of China, but his mother, Queen Zhao, is remembered for something rather more sordid. Zhao was conducting an affair with one of the ministers, Lü Buwei, but it wasn't enough. Lü Buwei found it difficult to discreetly visit his queen, and Zhao needed more attention.

So, they hatched a plan. They tracked down Lao Ai, who was known around town for one thing: he was particularly well-endowed. So well-endowed, in fact, his party trick was apparently putting a wheel on his manhood like an axle. Lao Ai agreed to become Zhao's lover, but to get him close enough to the queen, there was one more step in the plot: a faked castration. Lü Buwei faked the procedure and plucked out Lao Ai's hair and beard, and Lao Ai was introduced to court as a eunuch. He was sent to serve the queen, and everyone was satisfied. But the plot was eventually uncovered. Lao Ai, and three generations of his family, were executed, while Lü Buwei and Zhao were banished.

ELAGABALUS: ONE OF ROME'S MOST UNHINGED EMPERORS

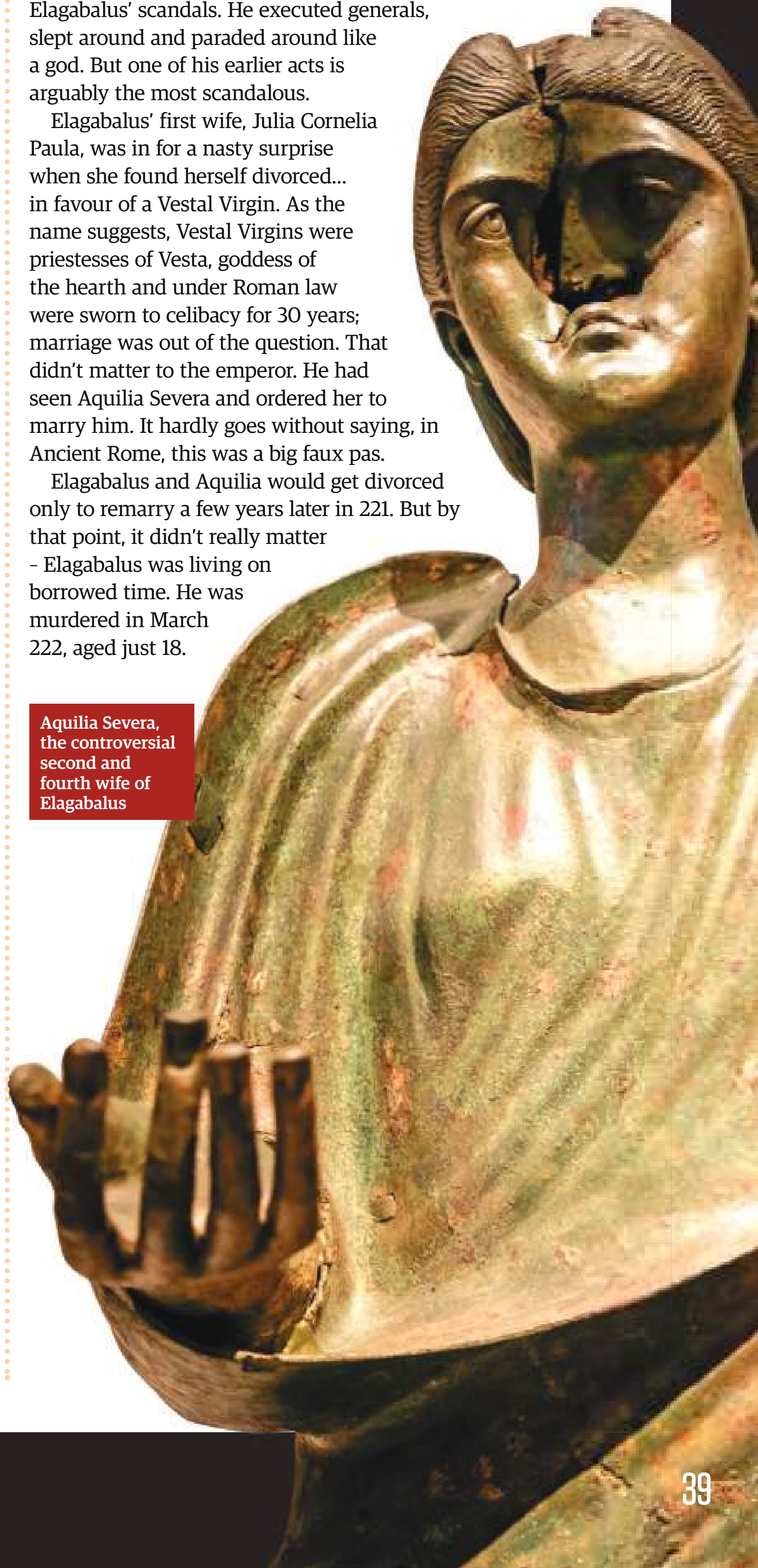
A teenager who was never told 'no'

220 CE

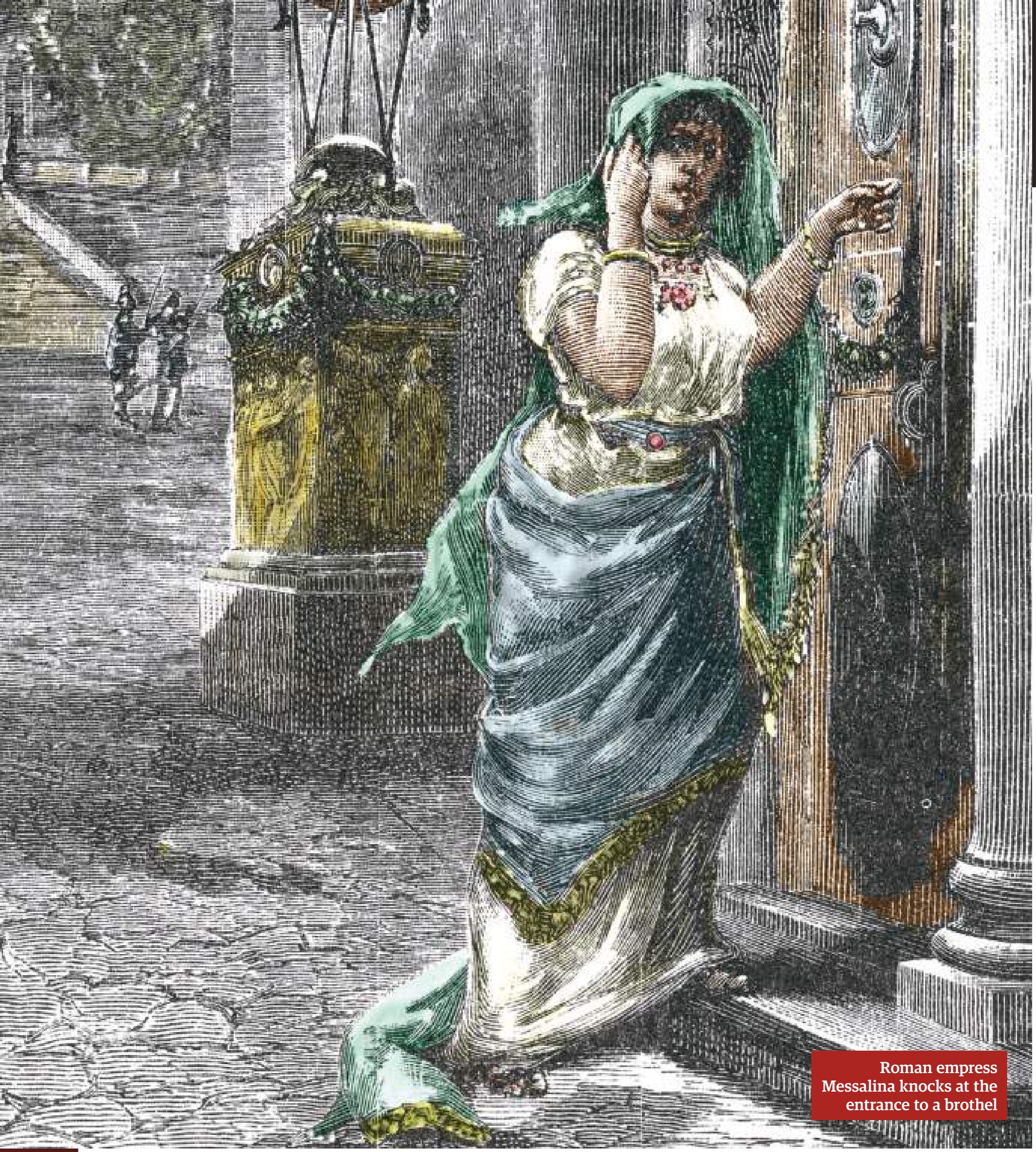
It's hard to know where to start when it comes to Elagabalus' scandals. He executed generals, slept around and paraded around like a god. But one of his earlier acts is arguably the most scandalous.

Elagabalus' first wife, Julia Cornelia Paula, was in for a nasty surprise when she found herself divorced… in favour of a Vestal Virgin. As the name suggests, Vestal Virgins were priestesses of Vesta, goddess of the hearth and under Roman law were sworn to celibacy for 30 years; marriage was out of the question. That didn't matter to the emperor. He had seen Aquilia Severa and ordered her to marry him. It hardly goes without saying, in Ancient Rome, this was a big faux pas.

Elagabalus and Aquilia would get divorced only to remarry a few years later in 221. But by that point, it didn't really matter – Elagabalus was living on borrowed time. He was murdered in March 222, aged just 18.



Aquilia Severa, the controversial second and fourth wife of Elagabalus



Roman empress Messalina knocks at the entrance to a brothel

ROMAN WIFE CHEATS ON HER HUSBAND... THE EMPEROR

Messalina attracted scandal wherever she went

48 CE

When it came to affairs, Messalina was apparently something of an expert. Some gossipers put her lover count at more than 150, while others claimed she worked as a prostitute at a brothel during the night before returning home to her husband in the morning. Who was her husband? Emperor Claudius. The rumours probably did little to help Messalina's fate.

In fact, it was a relationship with one of her lovers that ultimately got Messalina in trouble. Gaius Silius was a senator – and Messalina wanted to marry him. It didn't matter that she was married to Claudius, because he was out of town; the wedding went ahead anyway, with an extravagant reception. But Messalina had made a lot of enemies, and they were all clamouring to be the one to tell Claudius what his wife had done.

Claudius was almost ready to let the whole thing go, but it was too big a scandal. With advisors whispering in his ear, it became obvious that the line had to be drawn somewhere with Messalina's behaviour. She was forced to take her own life and a *damnatio memoriae* was ordered, removing any traces of her existence from public and private places.

"MESSALINA HAD MADE A LOT OF ENEMIES, AND THEY WERE CLAMOURING TO BE THE ONE TO TELL CLAUDIUS WHAT HIS WIFE HAD DONE"

MAIMING YOUR WAY TO THE THRONE

Irene of Athens had a unique way of taking control

797 CE

N. CONSTANTINVS. AVG. ET. HIRENA. M

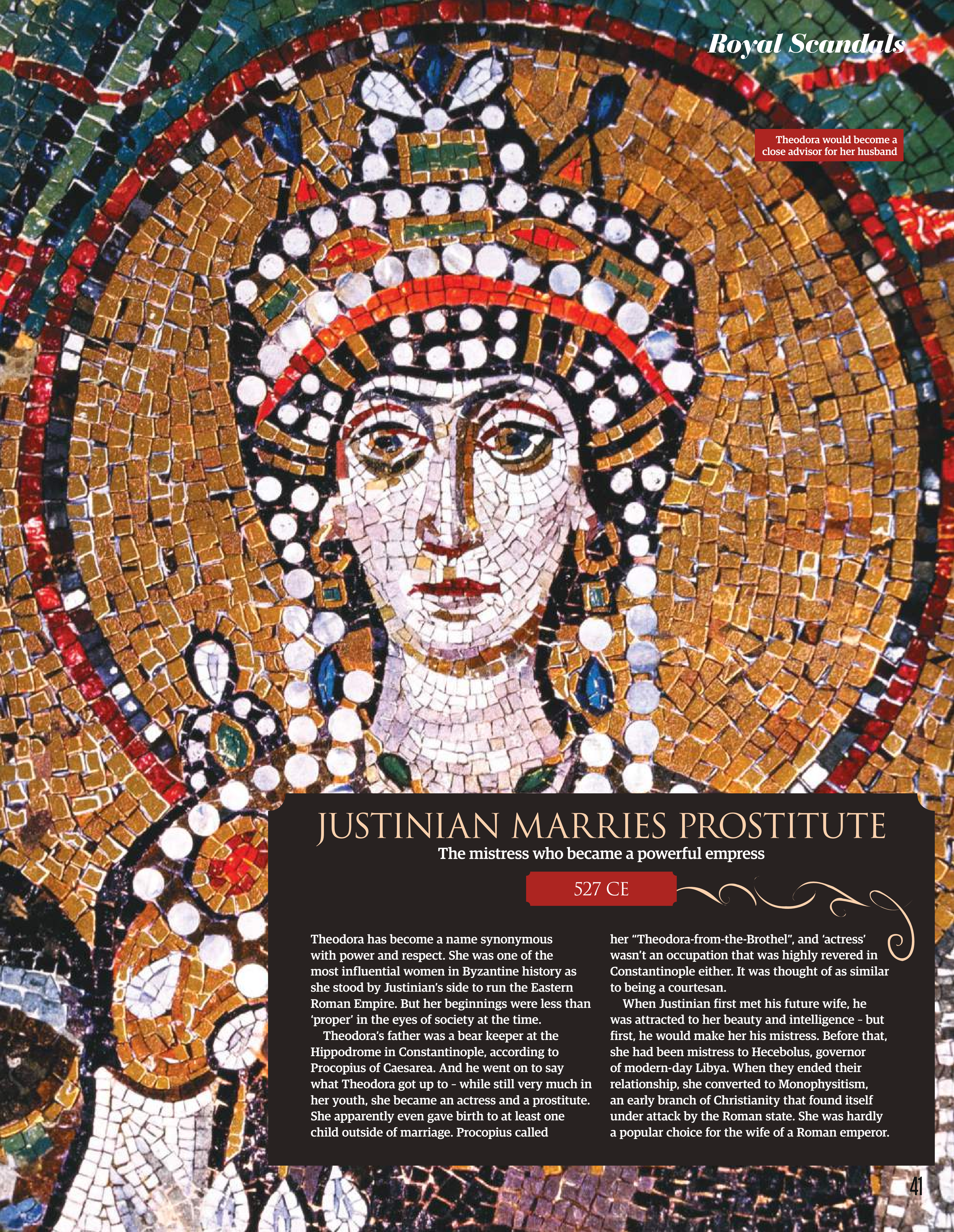
Irene alongside her son, Constantine VI, who she would later have mutilated

Sometimes, when someone is given a taste of power, they'll do everything they can to hold onto it. Irene of Athens was the consort of the Byzantine emperor Leo IV and managed to overthrow a conspiracy that wanted to put Leo's half-brother on the throne after his death. Instead, her son, Constantine VI, came to the throne although he was a child. As a result, she served as regent with the expectation that she would stand aside when Constantine came of age.

That didn't happen. As Constantine got older, Irene got more worried. The day was fast approaching when she would fade into irrelevance, something that her rivals were already trying to make happen, and that couldn't come to pass. Her response was to go after her son. She knew Constantine would try to get away from her, so she arranged for his capture as soon as he attempted to escape. Once he was in her custody, she ordered his eyes to be gouged out. It was a gruesome punishment for simply growing up.

Constantine died from his treatment 17 days later, and Irene was in the clear. She proclaimed herself empress, with no need for a man to rule alongside her. The pope of the time wasn't exactly pleased – Leo III proclaimed Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor in her place, although Irene continued to rule. Her peace wouldn't last, though, as she was overthrown five years later in 802, and died in exile on the island of Lesbos.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images



Theodora would become a close advisor for her husband

JUSTINIAN MARRIES PROSTITUTE

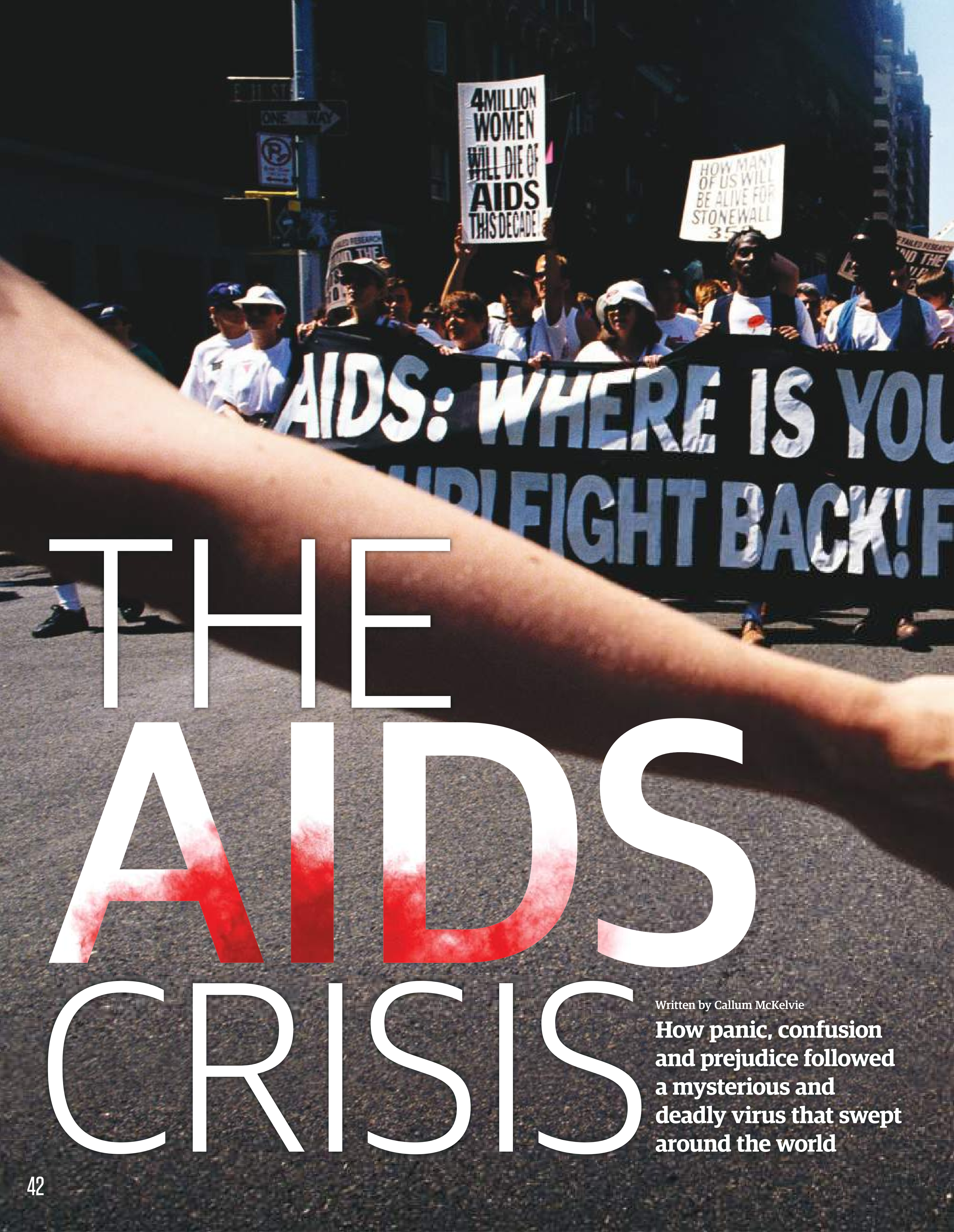
The mistress who became a powerful empress

527 CE

Theodora has become a name synonymous with power and respect. She was one of the most influential women in Byzantine history as she stood by Justinian's side to run the Eastern Roman Empire. But her beginnings were less than 'proper' in the eyes of society at the time.

Theodora's father was a bear keeper at the Hippodrome in Constantinople, according to Procopius of Caesarea. And he went on to say what Theodora got up to – while still very much in her youth, she became an actress and a prostitute. She apparently even gave birth to at least one child outside of marriage. Procopius called her "Theodora-from-the-Brothel", and 'actress' wasn't an occupation that was highly revered in Constantinople either. It was thought of as similar to being a courtesan.

When Justinian first met his future wife, he was attracted to her beauty and intelligence – but first, he would make her his mistress. Before that, she had been mistress to Hecebolus, governor of modern-day Libya. When they ended their relationship, she converted to Monophysitism, an early branch of Christianity that found itself under attack by the Roman state. She was hardly a popular choice for the wife of a Roman emperor.


ONE WAY
4 MILLION WOMEN ~~WILL~~ DIE OF AIDS THIS DECADE!
HOW MANY OF US WILL BE ALIVE FOR STONEWALL 35
AIDS: WHERE IS YOU
FIGHT BACK! F

THE AIDS CRISIS

Written by Callum McKelvie

How panic, confusion and prejudice followed a mysterious and deadly virus that swept around the world

AIDS: WHERE IS YOUR RAGE? ACT UP
AIDS: WHERE IS YOUR RAGE? ACT UP
SILENCE=DEATH
HOW MANY OF US WILL BE ALIVE FOR STONEWALL 35?
AIDS: WHERE IS YOUR RAGE? ACT UP
13 YEARS OF FAILED RESEARCH DEMAND THE AIDS CURE PROJECT
AIDS: WHERE IS YOUR RAGE
UR RAGE? IGHT AIDS!
IN THE TR
ACT U

In 1981, five healthy gay men, all between the ages of 29 and 35 and all within the area of Los Angeles, were treated for Pneumocystis Pneumonia. This was highly unusual. PCP is a rare infection, typically only seen in patients with immune deficiency. But such was its severity that two of the five would never leave the hospital. On 5 June, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report covered the cases and concerns were quickly raised about the possibility of a deadly affliction striking down gay men. By 1986, both the virus and the immune deficiency condition it caused had been named; HIV and AIDS. It would take 15 years for effective treatment to be developed and by 1990 more than 100,000 people in the United States alone had died. What's more, the stigma associated with the illness led to a wave of homophobia and a lack of understanding that remains to this day.

THE PANDEMIC BEGINS

Following the MMWR report's publication and an outbreak of a similarly rare form of cancer, Kaposi's sarcoma, in New York, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) began to investigate. At the time, few facts were known and the popular notion was that the condition only affected gay men. This conviction led to the coining of the term GRID or 'Gay-Related Immune Deficiency' to describe the condition.

Already, news of the affliction was circulating among the United States queer communities. In August of 1981, the playwright and author Larry Kramer (who later dramatised his experience in *The Normal Heart*) arranged a meeting of 80 gay men in his New York apartment. Here Dr Alvin E Friedman-Kien, who alongside Dr Linda Laubenstein had written the paper on the outbreak of Kaposi's sarcoma, gave a presentation outlining his fears.

© Getty Images

ACT UP FOR WOMEN'S LIVES

Andy Humm, an attendee of the event, explained in a retrospective article for *Philadelphia Gay News* that the origins of the illness were still unknown and as such there was much speculation. "We knew the gay patients were immunosuppressed but not why," he began. "Recreational drug use? Multiple STIs from multiple partners? There was even speculation about a viral agent." By the meeting's end a total of $6,635 had been raised and was used to found Gay Men's Health Crisis, an organisation designed to provide support and to fund research. In September 1982, the CDC gave a name to the mysterious affliction: AIDS.

By 1983 AIDS was sweeping across the country. At that year's National Aids Forum, 11 gay men living with the condition outlined a list of principles that they hoped the healthcare professionals present would adopt. They stated how they were not to be called 'victims' but instead were to be referred to as 'people with AIDS' and demanded an equal opinion on their own healthcare. They also demanded the right to live sexually free lives and the right to live without discrimination. According to UNAIDS, the 'Denver Principles', as they became known, were central to the Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV policy formalised in 1994. By the end of 1983, AIDS had become so prevalent that the World Health Organisation began formally monitoring the illness.

THE MYTH OF PATIENT ZERO

In 1984, an article published in the *American Journal of Medicine* attempted to trace a cluster of 40 AIDS cases. Openly gay flight attendant Gaétan Dugas participated in the research and was given the moniker 'Patient O', meaning 'out of state' and not from Southern California. However at some point a typo occurred and Dugas was mistakenly referred to as 'Patient Zero'. Three years later this mistake led journalist Randy Shilts in his groundbreaking book *And The Band Played On: Politics, People, And The AIDS Epidemic* to indicate that Dugas was central to the current crisis and could even have been the cause.

Dugas passed away in 1984, but the impact of Shilts' book was a media frenzy in which *The New York Post* named him "The Man who gave us AIDS". Dugas was portrayed as a reckless figure who flew from coast to coast, knowingly passing HIV to others. According to *New York* magazine, Shilts confessed he found the term Patient 0 'catchy' but was shocked when his publisher, Michael Denneny emphasised Dugas as the villain of the book, a decision Denneny later regretted.

However, others were sceptical. In 2016, a genetic study was able to prove that the virus had been in New York since roughly 1970 - four years before Dugas began working as a flight attendant. In 2017 Richard A McKay's book *Patient Zero And The Making Of The Aids Epidemic* finally revealed how Dugas had been scapegoated and cleared his name for good. Dugas is just one example of a gay man vilified as a monster intentionally transmitting HIV.

"AIDS had become so prevalent that the World Health Organisation began formally monitoring the illness"

BELOW Teenager Ryan White attending class after previously being barred from school due to his AIDS diagnosis

THE EFFECT ON RACIAL MINORITIES

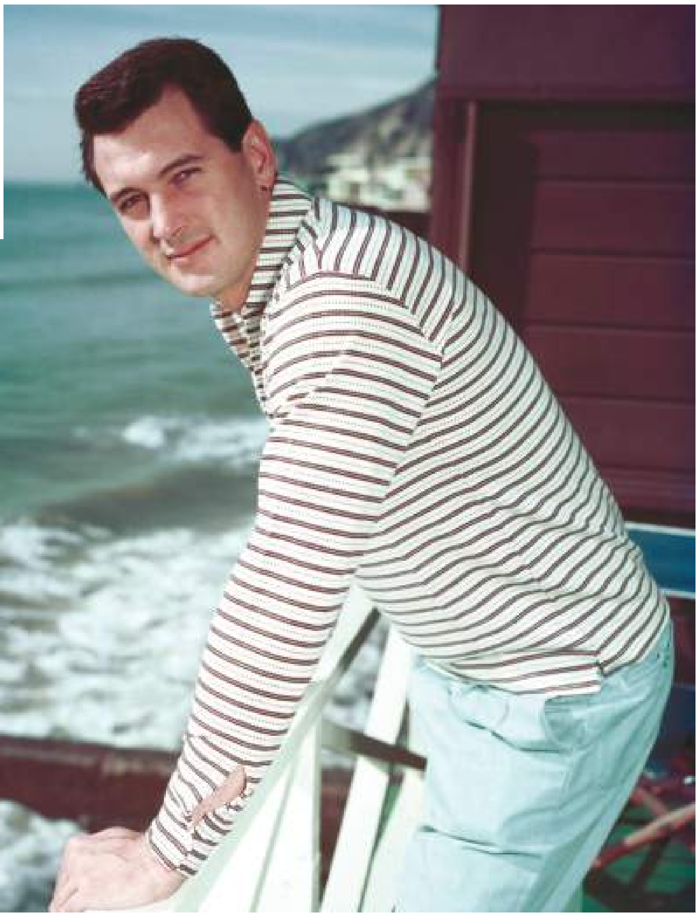
Throughout the crisis, as well as sexual minorities, racial minority groups were also disproportionately affected. By 1985 a quarter of persons diagnosed were from African American communities. For much of the 1980s and early 90s AIDS was the leading cause of death for men between the ages of 25 and 44. Although by 1996 this was no longer the case, it remained the leading cause of death for African American men in the same age group. This same year was also the first instance of higher AIDS diagnoses among African Americans than white Americans.

According to historian Dan Royles, groups such as Gay Men of African Descent were created to not only spread AIDS awareness, but also to fight racism and homophobic views. In a blog for Black Perspectives he wrote that GMAD "recognized that Black gay men confronted HIV alongside psychological and social pressures that made them especially vulnerable to infection."

SILENCE=DEATH
ACT UP FOR

LEFT Police attempt to remove ACT UP protestors in February of 1990

RIGHT Film star Rock Hudson was the first major celebrity to die of AIDS-related complications



All images: © Getty Images

AIDS IN THE UK

The first whisperings of a virus causing immune deficiency appeared in the United Kingdom in 1981. By 1987 there were more than 7,000 cases, and the average survival rate of people with AIDS was only 1-2 years. In 1987 the first antiretroviral drug was made available through the NHS.

Princess Diana helped shift public perceptions surrounding AIDS when she shook hands and hugged patients after opening the UK's first HIV/Aids ward at the Middlesex Hospital. According to Terrence Higgins Trust she famously stated: "HIV does not make people dangerous to know. You can shake their hands and give them a hug. Heaven knows they need it." *Time* magazine records that, by the end of 1985, there was at least one reported case of AIDS in every region in the world.

THE EPIDEMIC SPREADS

Back in the USA, perceptions over who could and could not contract HIV were altered in 1984 when 13-year-old schoolboy Ryan White was diagnosed with the condition. White was a haemophiliac who had contracted the virus through a blood transfusion but when news of his diagnosis reached his school in Kokomo, he was barred from attending classes.

Despite fighting a successful legal battle, the subsequent bullying and abuse he and his family faced (at one point having the windows of their home broken and their car tyres slashed) forced the family to move in 1987 to the town of Cicero. Here, the residents educated themselves about HIV and White was largely accepted. White would pass away in 1990, only 18 years old.

On 2 October 1985, Rock Hudson, the star of such films as 1956's *Giant* and the purported favourite film of Howard Hughes,

▶

WHAT IS HIV AND AIDS?

Essential facts to know

Human Immunodeficiency Virus, commonly known as HIV, is a virus often transmitted through sexual intercourse that results in damage to the immune system and makes the body more susceptible to illnesses and disease. AIDS or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, refers to a condition that develops as a result of the virus wherein illnesses or infections become life threatening. Despite persistent rumours that HIV originated in humans following an unknown individual having sexual intercourse with a chimpanzee, it is far more likely (according to Be In The Know) that chimpanzee meat was consumed. The first confirmed case of HIV appeared in 1959 in the Republic of Congo, but the endemic in the US is believed to have begun around the mid-1970s.

HAT ABOUT
AIDS
WHAT ABOUT
AIDS
GEORGE
GEORGE
GEORGE

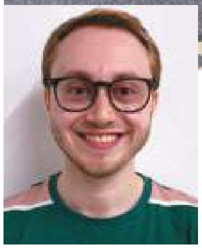
FIGHTING STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

Adam Freedman, senior policy and campaigns officer at National AIDS Trust, spoke to us about the organisation's history and work

Find out more at www.nat.org.uk

AIDS TRUST
Fight HIV stigma
Fight HIV stigma
Equal HIV fertility rights now
Hug me, I have HIV!
WE ARE POSITIVE
NATIONAL AIDS TRUST

Representatives of the National AIDS Trust marching at the 2023 London Pride



What is the National AIDS Trust?

National AIDS Trust is the UK's HIV rights charity. We work to stop HIV from standing in the way of health, dignity and equality, and to end new HIV transmissions. We do this by engaging with the government, politicians, the NHS and other public bodies on policy issues affecting people living with HIV.

We were originally founded in 1987 as an NGO by the government, at the height of the AIDS epidemic, to deal with growing concern about HIV/AIDS. However, for many years since, we have been operating as an independent policy and campaigning charity.

What has your work revealed about the current stigmas surrounding HIV?

As part of our work, we regularly engage with people living with HIV and hear their stories. It's clear from the conversations we have that HIV is still incredibly stigmatised and misunderstood by the public. Stigma often manifests itself as discrimination, in so many settings including healthcare, employment, the criminal justice system, education – the list is endless.

In my opinion, the government's health campaigns on AIDS in the 1980s were so effective that they are still embedded in the public consciousness. People still think of HIV as a death sentence, don't understand how it is transmitted, and are still terrified of it. This fear leads to misinformation, stigma and discrimination.

What are some of the issues that you work to resolve?

We run a Discrimination Advice service to connect people living with HIV to initial legal advice about whether they have experienced discrimination. In the last year, we have assisted with 69 cases – which is a huge number!

We also look at the patterns of discrimination incidents, work out if existing laws, rules or guidance are outdated or unclear, and campaign to get public bodies to change these if they lead to HIV discrimination. Two recent campaigns that we've been working on relate to data protection for people living with HIV, and workplace health and safety.

Could you please explain the current discriminatory laws surrounding HIV fertility rights?

Currently, people living with HIV are forbidden by law to donate sperm or eggs unless they are in a heterosexual relationship. This means many people living with HIV are unable to access fertility treatment or start a family – even though the scientific evidence says there is no risk of them transmitting HIV this way. These current regulations are both discriminatory and based on outdated science.

How are you campaigning to change these laws? How can our readers help?

The Health Secretary has the power to change these discriminatory regulations, and so our campaign has been focused on making people aware of this. The most helpful thing that people can do is write to their MP, explaining the reasons why the law needs to change, and asking them to urge the Health Secretary to change the law to follow the science. Everyone can read more details about the campaign, the law and the science on our website.

1968's *Ice Station Zebra*, died of AIDs-related complications. The news rocked the world. Hudson had been a 60s heartthrob, an icon of American television and a close friend of President Ronald Reagan. Hudson had been diagnosed in 1984 and decided to go public in 1985, revealing his own sexuality in the process.

Following his passing, Hudson left $250,000 that was used to launch the American Foundation for AIDS Research. Alongside White's diagnosis, Hudson's pronouncement of his illness helped shift public perception and in September, President Reagan discussed AIDS publicly for the first time. His death also spurred fellow actor Elizabeth Taylor into helping form the American Foundation for AIDs Research and to become one of the leading celebrity voices campaigning against government inaction.

ACT UP

On 1 May 1986, The International Committee on the Taxonomy of Viruses finally gave a name to the virus that was causing AIDS – Human Immunodeficiency Virus. At the beginning of the year, the CDC published figures that demonstrated an 89 per cent increase in transmissions. By this date, 51 per cent of adults and 59 per cent of children with AIDS had died. Chillingly, they predicted that the number of AIDS cases would double. With little action coming from the federal government, it became clear something had to be done.

In 1987, New York's Lesbian and Gay Community Center formed the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power, or ACT UP, an organisation that was designed to force the lackadaisical government into action. ACT UP undertook a series of radical protests including placing a giant condom over the home of North Carolina senator Jesse Helms who had called homosexuals 'weak'. Perhaps most famously in 1992 a group of ACT UP activists scattered the ashes of their loved ones who had died of AIDS-related illnesses on the lawn of the White House. But they also sought to help combat discrimination and assisted those who had been made homeless due to their diagnosis.

One of the most important developments, in 1987, was the discovery of Azidothymidine or AZT as an effective treatment against HIV. Fast tracked, the initial test trial of the drug remains controversial as some 300 participants were randomly assigned either the drug or a placebo. After 16 weeks the group on the drug had had only one death, whereas the group on the placebo suffered 19, according to *Time* magazine.

That same year, President Reagan created the first Presidential Commission on AIDS designed to investigate the epidemic and in October the CDC launched an AIDS Awareness Month. But there was still much discrimination and lack of understanding. The Ray brothers who were 8, 9 and 10 respectively had their home burnt down. Similar to Ryan White, the brothers were haemophiliacs who contracted HIV through a blood transfusion and had recently won a case that they could not be barred from their school due to their status as HIV positive.

> "However at some point a typo occurred and Dugas was mistakenly referred to as 'Patient Zero'"

In 1988, C Everett Koop, the US surgeon general who had been prevented from making statements previously, was able to mail out a slimmed-down version of his 1986 AIDS report. According to the National Library of Medicine, copies of the report were delivered to all 107,000,000 households and helped to better educate the population.

DAWN OF THE NEW DECADE

The 1990s saw a change in perceptions. Following the death of Ryan White, President HW Bush signed the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act that provided funding for the care and treatment of people with AIDS. However, there was a dark side. A paper published in *AIDS and Behavior* in 2017 explained that: "As one of its conditions for receiving federal funds, the Ryan White Care Act required all US states to certify that they had a legal mechanism to prosecute HIV-infected individuals who knowingly exposed others to HIV." Subsequent laws criminalising HIV exposure through 'reckless/intentional transmission' continue globally and remain a point of contention.

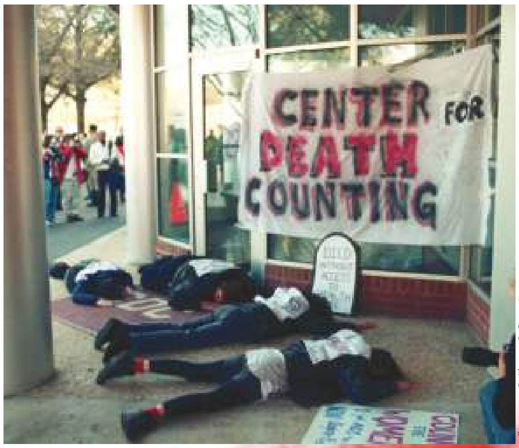
In 1996, a major breakthrough was achieved in AIDS treatment. It was discovered that triple-drug treatment of saquinavir, ddC, and AZT (collectively known as HAART) could suppress HIV for far longer than the treatments currently available. According to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, this therapy saw the level of HIV in a person's bloodstream drop to almost undetectable levels. That same year, the CDC reported that – for the first time since the epidemic had begun – there had been a noticeable decrease in the number of HIV transmissions, 12 per cent in the first two quarters of the year.

Of course this was not the end of the story as, unfortunately, this pandemic has not ended. According to UNAIDS, 2022 saw some 630,000 people die from AIDS-related illnesses. But, thanks to developments in treatments and persistent campaigning by hard working activists, people with HIV are able to live fulfilling lives. However, stigma surrounding HIV – and those who can contract it – remains. HIV devastated the queer community and saw thousands dead, but it is not a 'gay plague' and can affect anyone. Only through greater understanding, kindness and awareness can we prevent further transmissions.

BELOW-LEFT The organisation 'Gay Men of African Descent' marching in the 1995 New York City pride

BELOW-MIDDLE Princess Diana became an official patron for the British National AIDS Trust and sought to end the stigma surrounding HIV

BELOW-RIGHT Activists protest outside the headquarters of the CDC in 1990



All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

Alessandro de' Medici

THE BLACK PRINCE OF FLORENCE

A tale of race, rivalry and revenge, but was he the tyrant his enemies claimed?

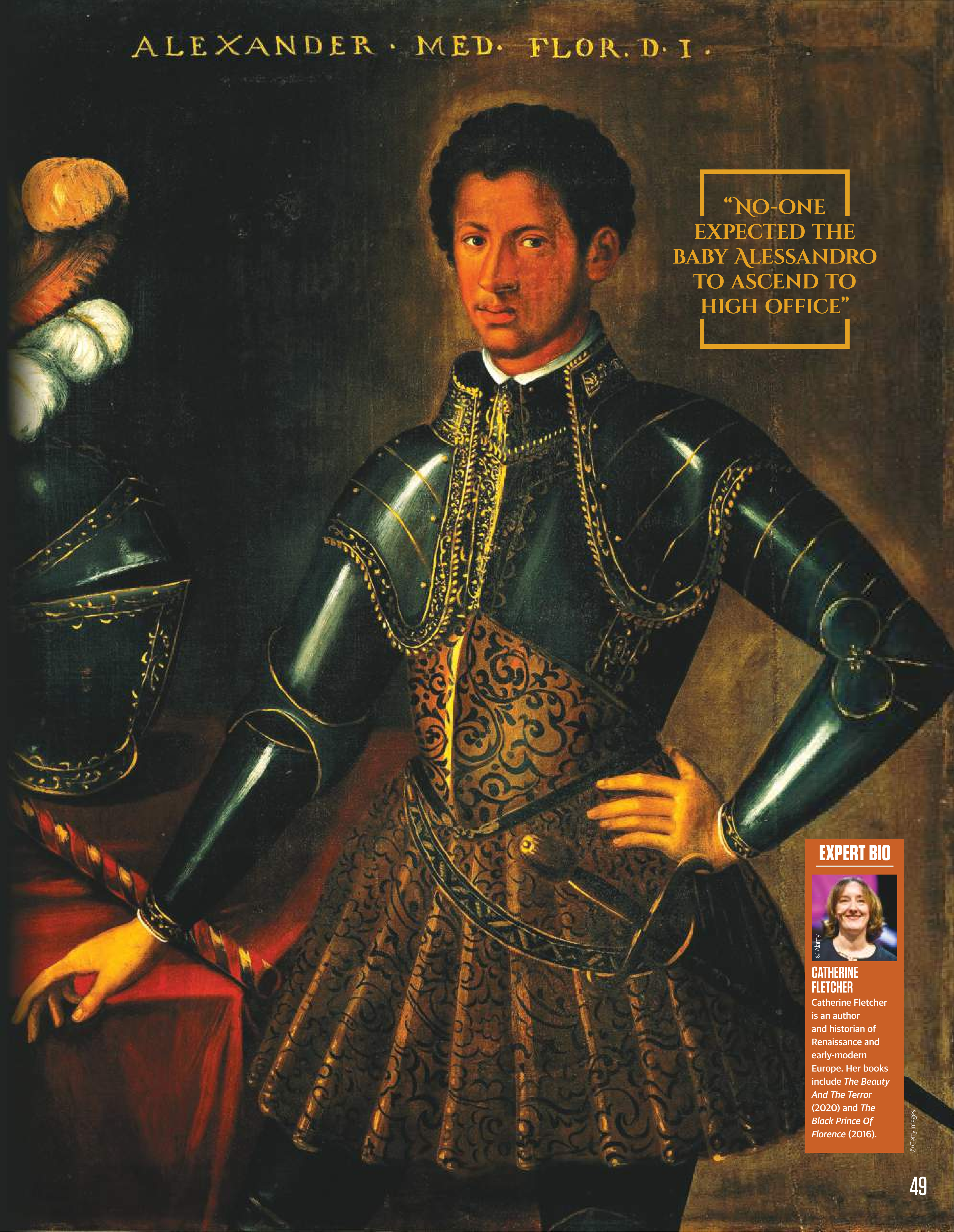
Written by Catherine Fletcher

One of the most unlikely men to come to power in Renaissance Italy, Alessandro de' Medici, ruler of Florence from 1531 to 1537, was probably born in Rome around 1512. He was illegitimate, and most contemporary writers say that his father was Lorenzo de' Medici, duke of Urbino (grandson of the famous patron Lorenzo 'the Magnificent'). A minority of sources point instead to Giulio de' Medici, the future Pope Clement VII and Lorenzo's cousin once removed. Others, perhaps more honestly, say it is impossible to know. Alessandro may not have been certain himself.

Information about his mother is no easier to come by. She is generally known as Simunetta, though one source gives her the name Anna, and the most likely scenario is that she worked as a maid in the Medici household. It was all too common for female servants to be sexually exploited by the men they worked for, and especially if (as one source tells us) Simunetta was enslaved then it would have been very hard indeed for her to refuse.

That rumour that Simunetta was a slave, combined with other sources describing her as 'Moorish' and 'half-Negro', along with the textual and visual evidence for Alessandro's brown skin and curly black hair, together provide evidence that Alessandro was more likely than not a man of African descent. Contemporaries did not describe Alessandro as Black, and while some regarded him as unsuitable to rule on the grounds of his birth, they generally pointed to his mother's low status, rather than her race. This should not be a surprise, however: the modern language of race was only just beginning to develop in 16th century Europe. It came into being in the context of

▶


ALEXANDER · MED· FLOR. D· I ·

© Getty Images

> “NO-ONE EXPECTED THE BABY ALESSANDRO TO ASCEND TO HIGH OFFICE”

EXPERT BIO

© Alamy

CATHERINE FLETCHER

Catherine Fletcher is an author and historian of Renaissance and early-modern Europe. Her books include *The Beauty And The Terror* (2020) and *The Black Prince Of Florence* (2016).

the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans that began during Alessandro's lifetime.

No-one expected the baby Alessandro to ascend to high office, and for the first seven years of his life we have no surviving sources for him. At the time of his birth, 1512, the Medici were about to force their way back to power in Florence after 18 years of exile. The following year, Alessandro's great-uncle, Giovanni de' Medici, was elected Pope Leo X. Fortune seemed to be smiling on the family. It was not to last, however. In 1516, Leo's brother Giuliano died young, leaving only an illegitimate son, Ippolito. In 1519, Medici prospects deteriorated further with the death of Lorenzo de' Medici, the last legitimate male heir in the main line of the family. Giulio de' Medici, now a cardinal, could not marry, and beyond that were only distant cousins or relatives in the female line. Besides the illegitimate Alessandro, Lorenzo had left an infant daughter. This was Catherine de' Medici, the future queen of France. Florence, however, elected its leaders, and a woman could not be the family figurehead.

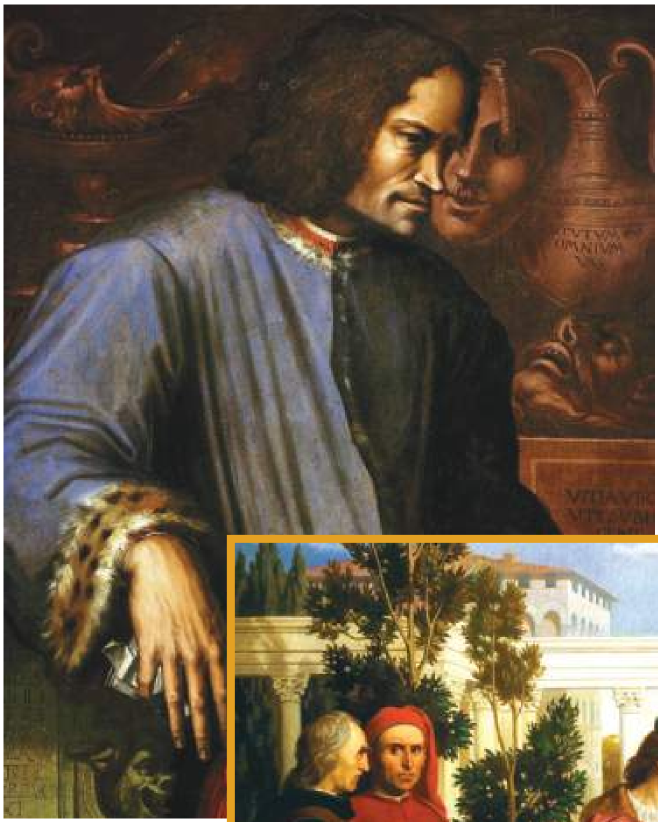
ONTO THE CHESSBOARD

It is at this point, after the death of his father, that Alessandro first appears in the historical record. "There are two little bastards," noted one observer. The other illegitimate child, Ippolito, Alessandro's cousin once-removed, had already been brought into the family. His mother was a gentlewoman of Urbino, and unlike Alessandro's mother, considered respectable. In Italy it was not unusual to legitimise children in this period, and while legitimised children were not equal to those born in wedlock, it was still possible for them to make an impressive career. In the first half of the previous century Carlo de' Medici, the son of an enslaved woman and a Medici man, had become a senior official at the papal court. A career in the church was a plausible option for Alessandro. There were, in fact, two Black bishops in the 16th century Roman Catholic church: Henrique, of Kongo, and Yohannes, born in Cyprus to exiled Ethiopian parents.

From around the age of seven, Alessandro began to appear in family records, the 'spare' to the heir Ippolito. In 1524, Ippolito, a year older than Alessandro and at this point about 13, was sent to Florence with a view to introducing him to city politics and preparing him for rule. By this time Pope Leo X was dead, but in 1523 his cousin Giulio de' Medici had been elected Pope Clement VII, putting the Medici back in power in both Rome and Florence (Clement is probably better known as the Pope who refused Henry VIII his first divorce). In 1525, Alessandro took up residence in the Medici villa at Poggio a Caiano, a little way out of town, where he enjoyed the traditional pastimes of a minor member of a wealthy family, especially hunting.

1527

There had, meanwhile, been a long on-off war in Italy, now lasting over three



ABOVE Alessandro himself was likely unsure who his father was, but it's suspected Lorenzo the Magnificent could have been his great grandfather

MEDICI FLORENCE: A TIMELINE

Medici rule in Florence spanned over 300 tumultuous years, taking the city from the Medieval period into the Renaissance and beyond

The Medici Bank founded
1397
Florence had long been a major banking centre when Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici opens his own bank in the city. The Medici Bank will soon have branches throughout Europe.

Gonfaloniere
1421
Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici takes a share in the rule of Florence in 1421 when he is appointed as one of the nine gonfalonieri, who serve as the city's government.

Duomo consecrated
1436
Florence's magnificent cathedral took 140 years to build and was constructed on the site of an earlier, 5th century cathedral. It is finally consecrated in 1436 by the pope himself.

Council of Ferrara-Florence
1439
Cosimo di Giovanni de' Medici persuades the pope to move the Council of Ferrara to Florence in 1439. The council nearly succeeds in uniting the Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches.

Gates of paradise
1452
Having produced the Baptistery's bronze north doors, Lorenzo Ghiberti is commissioned to create the east doors. Completed in 1452, they are so fine that Michelangelo nicknames them the 'gates of paradise'.

Palazzo Pitti
1457
The Palazzo Pitti is started in 1457 by Luca Pitti, a wealthy banker. The original building is massive. It will later be enlarged by the Medici, who purchase it in the 16th century.

Pazzi conspiracy
1478
The Medici make enemies in Florence and further afield. On 26 April 1478 Lorenzo the Magnificent narrowly escapes assassination during Mass in the Duomo. His brother, Giuliano, dies.

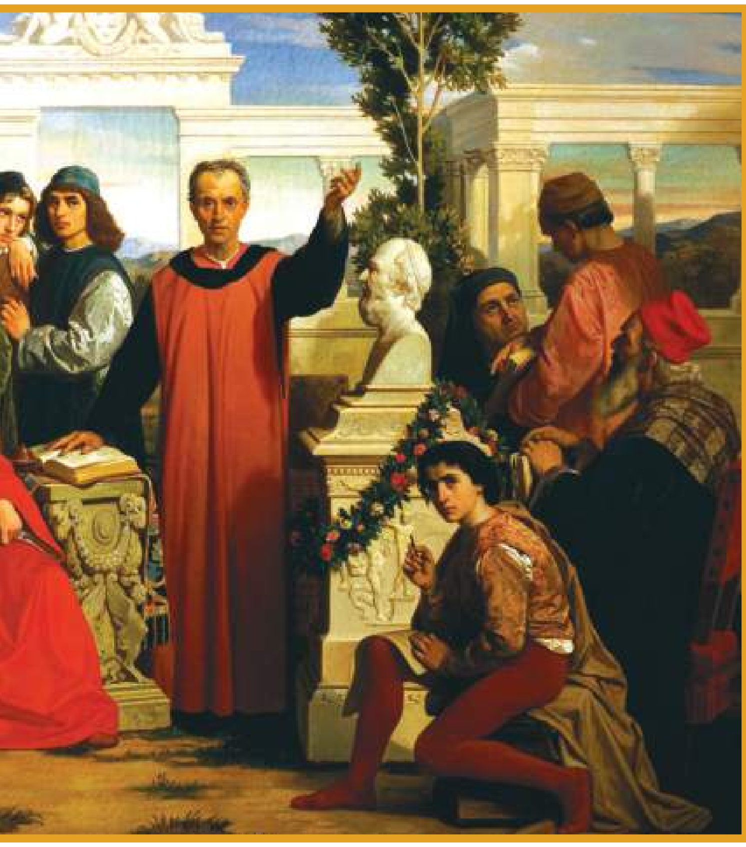
Bonfire of the Vanities
1497
The Medici were driven from Florence in 1494 in favour of theocratic government under Girolamo Savonarola. On 7 February 1497 Savonarola orders the burning of art, books and other supposedly sinful objects.

The Medici return
1512
The Medici finally return to Florence in 1512 after nearly 20 years of exile. Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici orchestrates the return, arriving in the city at the head of an army.

decades, with which the fortunes of the Medici were closely intertwined. This was fundamentally a contest between France and Spain for power and influence on the Italian peninsula, but drew in many local conflicts too. In 1527 troops loyal to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V sacked Rome, making Pope Clement an effective prisoner in his own castle. Charles, the most powerful man in Europe, was the ruler of Spain as well as the Habsburg territories in the modern Netherlands, Germany and Austria. In Florence, meanwhile, an uprising expelled the Medici once again from the city, putting their rivals (supporters of a broader-based government) in power.

This left the Medici family reliant for their power on Clement's position as pope, which was now perilously dependent on the outcome of the ongoing war. In spring 1529, when he became ill enough to fear for his life, he called in favours in order to make the still-underage Ippolito a cardinal, and thus ensure that in the event of his death the Medici would at least keep their power in the church. Clement, however, recovered, and made a peace on poor terms with Charles V. But with Ippolito now a cardinal, Alessandro became the candidate for a diplomatic marriage, and for the rulership of Florence, much to Ippolito's displeasure.

BELOW
Alessandro's mother, Simunetta, is believed to have been a slave of African decent working as a servant to the legendary Medici family



Just as an alliance with Spain had secured the Medici return to Florence in 1512, so it secured a further return from exile in 1530. The price was high: it took a nine-month siege to force out the republicans and put the Medici party back in power. Alessandro, however, did not immediately relocate to Florence. Leaving family allies to do the dirty work of dealing with their enemies, he headed north on a tour through Europe in the company of the man who was now to be his father-in-law, Charles V. Alessandro was betrothed to Charles' illegitimate daughter, Margaret, at this point only eight years old. The tour gave him an important opportunity, which he made the most of, to bond with Charles (who was only 12 years his senior) via the typical courtly pursuits of hunting and jousting. He was something of a star in the latter, on one occasion breaking 14 lances in a single tournament. One Italian observer noted that Charles saw Alessandro "not as a son-in-law but as a son." In 1531 Alessandro made his entrance to Florence, and in 1532 he formally became the city's duke.

> "HE WORE A DOUBLET REINFORCED WITH MAIL, THE RENAISSANCE EQUIVALENT OF BODY ARMOUR"

ALESSANDRO IN POWER

Most of the papers from Alessandro's period of government have been lost, so we know rather little about exactly how he governed Florence. His enemies were keen to paint him as a tyrant, and some of his officials certainly had reputations for brutality. On the whole, however, Alessandro seems to have run a populist regime, promising justice for the ordinary people and introducing reforms to keep prices down. He also, however, rebuilt the city fortifications: the Medici were nervous about holding power. Alessandro was known for playing football in the piazza, and for restarting the annual horse race known as the Palio. He began a relationship with Taddea Malaspina, who with her sister hosted a libertine circle of writers and artists; with whom he had two children. Meanwhile, Ippolito watched from the sidelines, wondering if he might ever achieve his ambition of ruling Florence and sometimes scheming to put himself in power, to the point of launching an abortive coup d'état. Alessandro was worried enough for his personal safety that when he went out he wore a doublet

▶

Giulio de' Medici, Archbishop of Florence
1513
From the late-15th century, the Medici regularly reach the top of the church hierarchy. In 1513 Giulio de' Medici becomes Archbishop of Florence. He later becomes Pope Clement VII in 1523.

Leo X in Florence
1515
The former Giovanni de' Medici, who has become Pope Leo X, makes a ceremonial entry to Florence in 1515. He receives a lavish welcome, with pageants, fireworks and celebrations.

The Medici flee
1527
When news of the sacking of Rome by the Holy Roman Emperor reaches Florence, the remaining Medici flee from the city. Their kinsman, Pope Clement VII, is imprisoned by the emperor.

Siege of Florence
1529-1530
Florence's citizens are not eager for the Medici to return. However, after a siege of nearly a year they capitulate to the Holy Roman Emperor, who reinstates Medici rule.

Duke of Florence
1532
Alessandro de' Medici becomes the first duke of Florence in 1532, elevating the family to princely status. He is nicknamed 'the Moor' and is possibly the son of an African slave.

Alessandro's murder
1537
Alessandro de' Medici is despotic and highly unpopular. He is murdered on 6 January 1537 by his cousin, Lorenzaccio, who is also later murdered. Cosimo I, a distant cousin, succeeds him.

Uffizi Palace
1560
Work began in 1560 on the Uffizi Palace, which is intended by Cosimo I to house the city's magistrates and other officials. Its name translates as 'offices'.

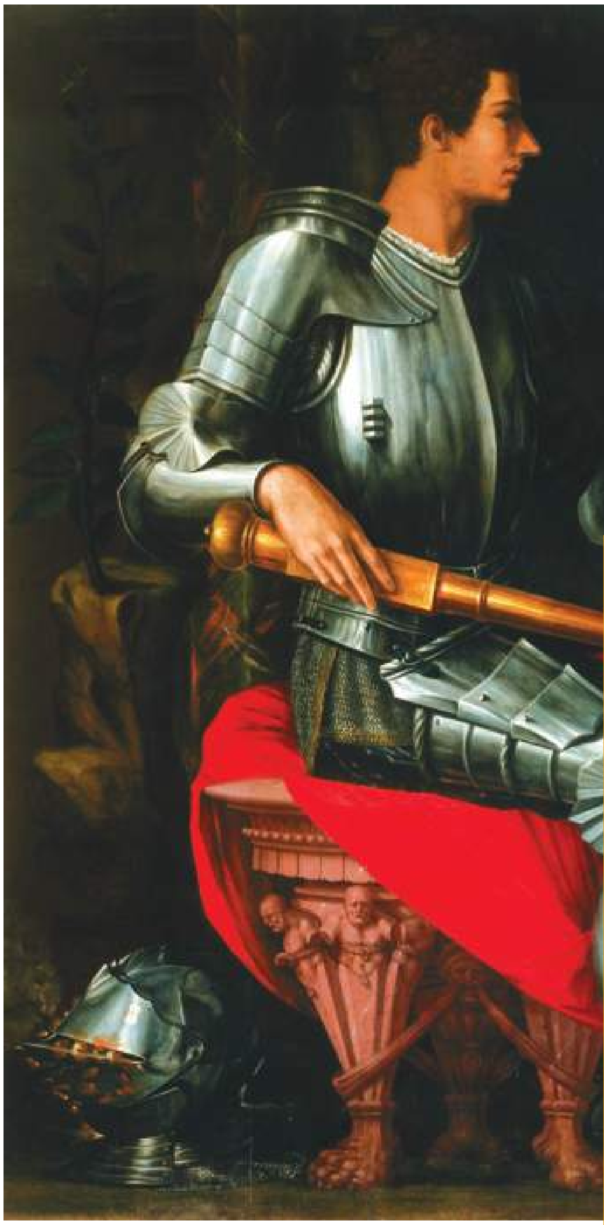
The Vasari Corridor
1564
Cosimo I builds a covered walkway, known as the Vasari Corridor. This runs from the Palazzo Vecchio, through the Uffizi, over the Ponte Vecchio bridge and on to the Palazzo Pitti.

Grand duke of Tuscany
1569
Cosimo I's ambitions are realised when the pope creates him grand duke of Tuscany. This makes him the premier ruler in Italy and the ruler of his own state.

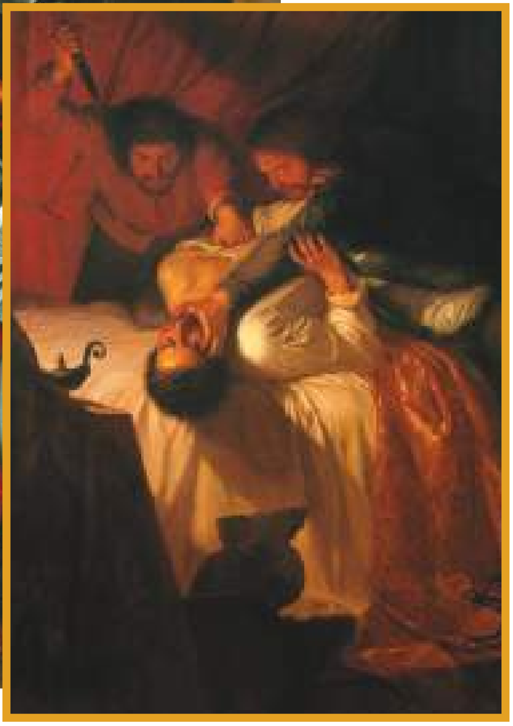
Devastating plague
1630-1633
Florence is hit by a devastating plague between 1630 and 1633. Measures are taken to halt the disease, such as celebrating Mass in the open air. However, 7,000 people die.

Gian Gastone dies
1737
Gian Gastone de' Medici reigned as grand duke of Tuscany between 1723 and 1737. His unhappy marriage and failure to produce an heir permanently end Medici rule in Florence.

All images © Getty Images



LEFT In 1532, Alessandro was formally named Duke of Florence



ABOVE The motive for Alessandro's murder may have been strained internal family politics between branches of the Medici family

reinforced with mail, the Renaissance equivalent of body armour.

While Clement VII remained pope, he succeeded, just, in keeping a lid on the rivalry between his two nephews. His death in 1534, however, left the way open for Ippolito to seize power, this time without his uncle's opposition. He made a temporary alliance with the old republican opponents of Medici rule, both sides agreeing that Alessandro would have to go. On the diplomatic front, they lobbied Charles V to hold a series of hearings about the future government of Florence. There were also, however, more violent plots, and rumours of plots. One plan included a chest of gunpowder to blow up the Malaspina residence. Alessandro, however, had numerous spies on his payroll, and in the summer of 1535, one agent managed to poison Ippolito's soup, eventually killing the cardinal.

> "IN THE 20TH CENTURY, HOWEVER, AFRICAN AMERICAN WRITERS BEGAN TO RECLAIM ALESSANDRO"

With Ippolito gone, the exiled republicans had lost the alternative to Alessandro. Though hearings before the Emperor went ahead, there was no real prospect of Charles backing an alternative form of government. Alessandro's rule secured, his marriage to Charles' daughter Margaret went ahead in the summer of 1536. About to turn 14, she was just of marriageable age. By the autumn of that year there were hopes that Margaret might be pregnant, but it was not to be.

Christmas passed, and New Year, and on the eve of Epiphany, Alessandro went out with his distant cousin Lorenzino and a group of friends. Still careful of his personal safety, as usual he wore his reinforced doublet. But tempted with the promise of an assignation with the attractive wife of a city merchant, he made the fatal mistake of taking it off. As he waited for the lady to arrive, he was ambushed and stabbed by Lorenzino and an accomplice. Alessandro's short years in power were over.

Lorenzino himself claimed to have been politically motivated in Alessandro's murder. More cynical observers pointed to a falling-out between the two sides of the Medici family (Lorenzino was a member of the junior branch), and to Lorenzino's debts. He spent a decade in exile before assassins caught up with him, but eventually they did: Alessandro's father-in-law, Charles V, had not forgotten the crime. A cousin from that junior branch of the family, Cosimo, became duke in Alessandro's place, then Grand Duke of Tuscany, building on Alessandro's legacy to cement the family's power as aristocratic rulers of Florence and beyond. For Cosimo, it was convenient to let Alessandro take the blame for the brutal first years of Medici rule. But while Alessandro had certainly gone along with the plan, he had always worked for the family.

LEGACY

Alessandro's story is a spectacular tale of family rivalry and revenge, given an extra twist by the questions about his race. So far as we can tell, it was only in the 19th century that this became a matter of interest to historians. This should perhaps not be a surprise given that this period was the height of so-called 'scientific' racism. Working from the visual evidence, writers linked Alessandro's appearance to his bad character and political tyranny. The Medici duchy was an example of feudal aristocratic power triumphing over a more broad-based republican form of government, and that put Alessandro on the wrong side of political history.

In the 20th century, however, African American writers began to reclaim Alessandro. In 1931 he was the subject of a feature in *Crisis*, the magazine of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in which Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, a distinguished collector of sources for African history, described him as the 'Negro Medici'. Alessandro went on to be included in a 1940s volume of the *World's Great Men Of Color*. Here was a rare example of a Black European in power.

All images: © Getty Images

DISCOVER THE WHOLE PICTURE

When you explore your family tree, you find names, dates and places. But it's the extra details that truly reveal your family story.

Ancestry has a huge range of historical records, and with an average of two million added every day, there's always more to discover. So even when you think you know your family, they can keep surprising you.

ancestry®
Bring your backstory to life™

October Record Highlights*

U.S., Order Sons of Italy in America News, 1953-1995 – **NEW**

Rostock, Germany, Parish Register Transcripts, 1580-1945 – **UPDATED**

Pyrénées-Orientales, France, Censuses, 1806-1936 – **NEW**

Do you have a fascinating family story to share?

We'd love to hear about your discoveries, email us at *yourstory@ancestry.co.uk*

*Record collections subject to change.

© Alamy

THE OTHER SAS

The forgotten Stirling brother whose vision formed the true legacy of the Special Air Service after WWII

Interview by Jonathan Gordon

The Special Air Service, the special forces unit within the British Army, has become legendary. No surprise then that its origins have taken on some myth-like qualities. Much of the story of the SAS's inception during WWII circles around the 'Phantom Major' David Stirling. But, as Gavin Mortimer's new book *2SAS: Bill Stirling And The Forgotten Special Forces Unit Of World War II* reveals, his brother Bill and the exploits of his SAS unit are the true predecessors of the modern force. We spoke with Mortimer to learn more about the elusive Bill Stirling and the lasting impact of his exploits during WWII.

Could you tell us a little about Bill Stirling and his background?

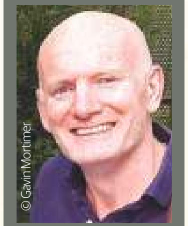
Bill was born in 1911, to brigadier general Archibald Stirling and his wife, Margaret, the daughter of the 13th Lord Lovat. Bill's father died in 1931, just before he turned 20, and he became the Laird of Keir, one of Scotland's wealthiest and most powerful landowners.

All the Stirling boys - Bill, Peter (later a diplomat), David and Hugh (killed in action in April 1941) were educated at Ampleforth. Bill thrived academically and athletically, and on leaving school he went up to Trinity, Cambridge, to read history. On graduating he was commissioned into the Scots Guards (at the same time as his cousin and best friend, Simon Fraser, later 15th Lord Lovat of Commando fame). Bill resigned his commission in 1936 because of mounting responsibilities as Laird of Keir (he was in charge of a vast estate and employed scores of staff) and also his business interests. He was a successful businessman when war was declared.

What was Bill's role in the founding of the SAS groups?

His background is important because it indicates his standing within the Establishment in 1939 which was a help in his military wartime career. His mother was a good friend of Queen Mary and Stanley Baldwin and ▶

EXPERT BIO

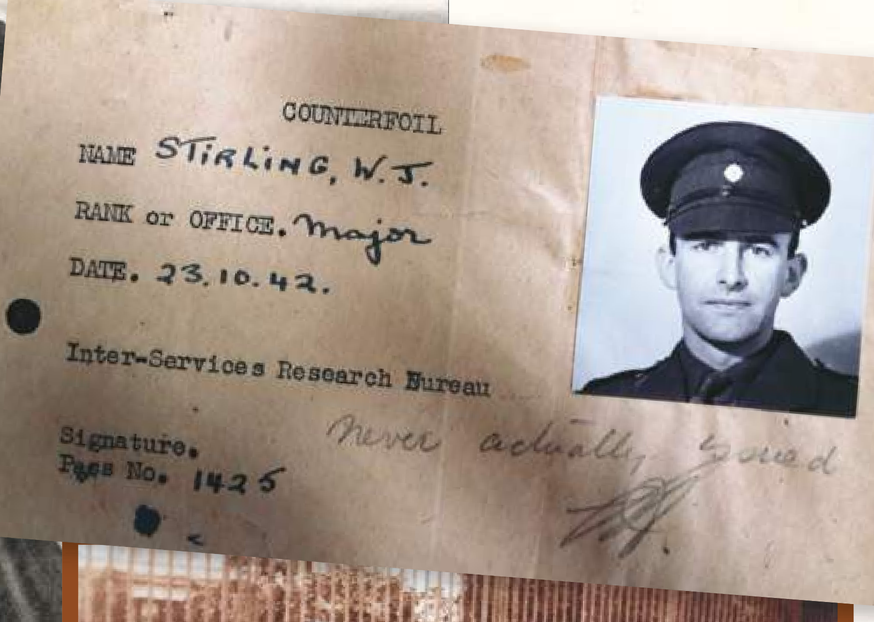

© Gavin Mortimer

GAVIN MORTIMER

Gavin Mortimer is a historian and author who has written extensively on the operations of the SAS during WWII. His books include *Z Special Unit* (2022) and *The SAS in World War II* (2015).

Some of 2SAS located west of the Elbe river on 28 April 1945

© Gavin Mortimer



COUNTERFOIL

NAME STIRLING, W.J.

RANK or OFFICE. Major

DATE. 23.10.42.

Inter-Services Research Bureau

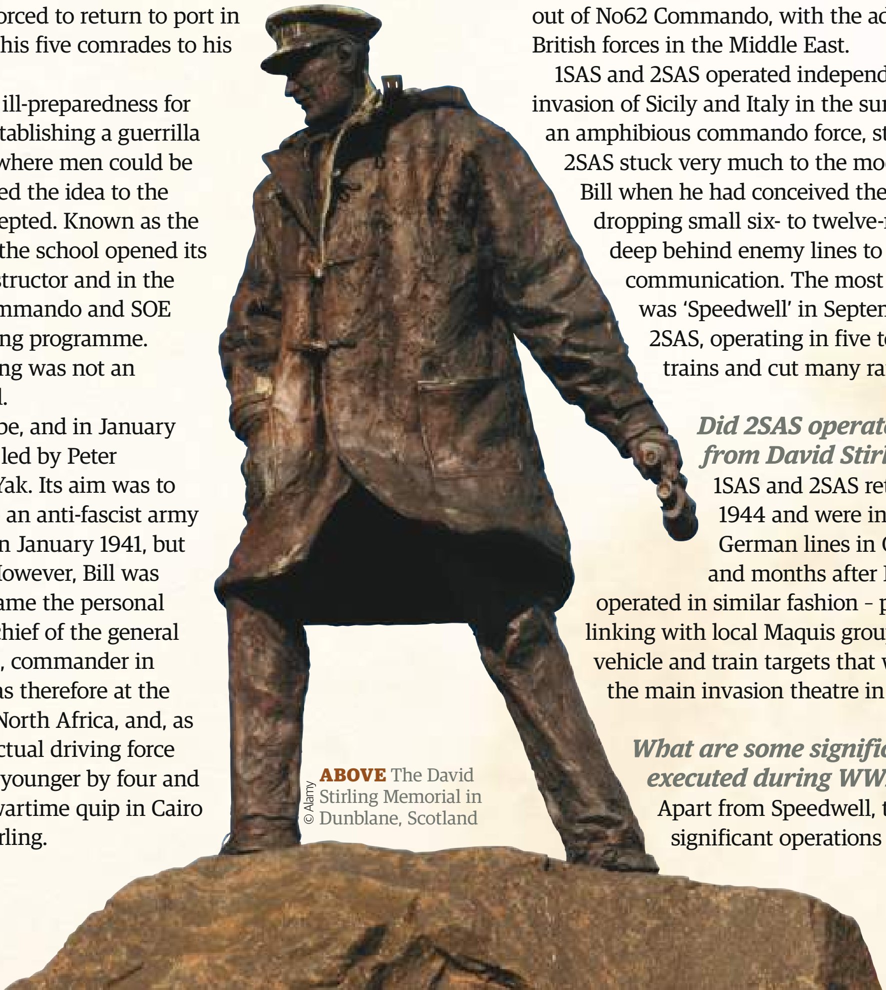
Signature. never actually issued

Pass No. 1425

his wife. This was why he was invited to join Military Intelligence Research (MIR) at the start of 1940. MIR was the forerunner of the Special Operations Executive (SOE). Bill was one of six men who was sent to Norway in late April 1940 to work with partisans in a sabotage campaign against German lines of communications. Unfortunately, en route to Norway their submarine was damaged by a surface mine and was forced to return to port in Glasgow. Deflated, Bill Stirling invited his five comrades to his Keir estate to drown their sorrows.

As they did so, they discussed their ill-preparedness for the sabotage mission; Bill proposed establishing a guerrilla training school in northern Scotland, where men could be trained for future operations. He pitched the idea to the war office in May 1940, and it was accepted. Known as the Special Training Centre in Lochailort, the school opened its door on 3 June 1940. Bill was chief instructor and in the next 18 months many hundreds of commando and SOE recruits underwent the guerrilla training programme. Contrary to popular myth, David Stirling was not an instructor at the centre; he was a pupil.

Bill had impressed the powers that be, and in January 1941 was recruited to an SOE mission, led by Peter Fleming (brother of Ian), codenamed Yak. Its aim was to recruit Italian POWs in North Africa to an anti-fascist army battalion. Bill Stirling sailed to Egypt in January 1941, but the mission was ultimately a failure. However, Bill was headhunted by GHQ at Cairo, and became the personal assistant to Lt-General Arthur Smith, chief of the general staff, who answered to General Wavell, commander in chief of Middle East command. Bill was therefore at the very heart of the British war effort in North Africa, and, as I argue in my book, he was the intellectual driving force behind the raising of the SAS. David – younger by four and a half years – was the frontman. The wartime quip in Cairo was that SAS stood for Stirling and Stirling.



ABOVE The David Stirling Memorial in Dunblane, Scotland

© Alamy

How were things divided between 1SAS and 2SAS?

David Stirling was captured in January 1943 just as Bill prepared to lead a small commando force (No62 Cdo) to North Africa from the UK. Bill heard of his brother's fate on arrival and he played a large part in the reorganisation of the SAS. Paddy Mayne was appointed Commanding Officer of 1SAS and Bill raised 2SAS out of No62 Commando, with the addition of 400 recruits from British forces in the Middle East.

1SAS and 2SAS operated independently of each other during the invasion of Sicily and Italy in the summer of 1943. 1SAS acted as an amphibious commando force, storming beaches etc, whereas 2SAS stuck very much to the modus operandi envisaged by Bill when he had conceived the idea of the SAS in 1941: i.e. dropping small six- to twelve-man teams by parachute deep behind enemy lines to destroy enemy lines of communication. The most successful such operation was 'Speedwell' in September 1943 when 13 men from 2SAS, operating in five teams, destroyed half a dozen trains and cut many railway lines in northern Italy.

Did 2SAS operate significantly differently from David Stirling's group?

1SAS and 2SAS returned to the UK in early 1944 and were involved in operations behind German lines in Occupied France in the weeks and months after D-Day. In this instance, they operated in similar fashion – parachuting into remote areas, linking with local Maquis groups and then attacking German vehicle and train targets that were heading north towards the main invasion theatre in Normandy.

What are some significant missions that 2SAS executed during WWII?

Apart from Speedwell, there were two other significant operations in northern Italy in 1944/45.

> “The wartime quip in Cairo was that SAS stood for Stirling and Stirling”

FAR-LEFT Pete Tomasso, Tony Greville-Bell and George Daniels who worked on Operation Speedwell

ABOVE-LEFT This photo of Bill Stirling was taken on the day he took command of the Small Scale Raiding Force

BELOW-LEFT Some of 2SAS who took part in Operation Rupert

The first was codenamed ‘Galia’; on 26 December 1944 the Germans had launched a counter-offensive against the Americans, and there was concern among the Allied high command that the Nazis would make considerable gains. At short notice, a 2SAS troop of 33 men were parachuted into the mountains 25 miles north of La Spezia and ordered to wage a guerrilla war, with the objective of making the Germans believe an airborne brigade had been drafted in to reinforce the Americans. For six weeks the SAS attacked the German convoys and barracks, blew up railway lines and mined roads. Two captured Germans revealed that they believed they were up against 500 British paratroopers. So the scheme worked.

The other mission was Operation Tombola, commanded by Roy Farran, which involved a squadron of 2SAS parachuting into an area south of Reggio on 6 March 1945. They then trained and organised disparate Italian partisan groups for two months, the high point of which was a night assault on the headquarters of 51 Corps at Albinea, which cost the lives of many Germans including a senior officer.

What was the lasting legacy for the Special Air Service of Bill Stirling’s work?

Probably best to quote Major Roy Farran, DSO, MC and 2 bars, the most famous and decorated officer of 2SAS. He said of Bill Stirling: “Bill was more of a planner than a leader on the ground, but all the same he was a very, very great soldier and he played a great part in Britain’s eventual victory in the war… He did realise that if you dropped small parties way behind enemy lines you could cut their lines of communication and cause panic.

“All military tactics are you either break them from the front or you go to the left or the right, but a new flank is opened with aircraft and you can go over the top and if you bust their lines of communication, they are liable to panic and yield the field.

Members of 2SAS wearing their Winged Dagger berets in 1945

“A lot of people think war is just about killing people; it isn’t. It’s occupying ground and if the enemy feel so nervous that they retreat you’ve won the battle and with minimum casualties. And the SAS opened up a new flank, in a way, they made the enemy very nervous about his rear areas.”

In contrast, David Stirling wasn’t a good strategist. He was reckless and gung-ho, and as a consequence the SAS did not fulfil their potential in the desert in 1942.

After the failure of their inaugural raid in November 1941 – when 34 of the 55 men who went on the operation were killed or captured – the SAS undertook no further parachute operations. They relied on the LRDG to drive them in lorries to their targets. It was only when Bill raised 2SAS that they reverted to parachute ops deep behind enemy lines. Frankly, it was a blessing in disguise that David was captured, because it allowed Bill Stirling and Paddy Mayne to assume command and henceforth the SAS became a more effective and professional force. ○

All images: © Gavin Mortimer

BELOW 2SAS soldiers celebrating with French villagers and local forces

2SAS
BILL STIRLING AND THE FORGOTTEN SPECIAL FORCES UNIT OF WORLD WAR II
GAVIN MORTIMER
Osprey

2SAS
BILL STIRLING AND THE FORGOTTEN SPECIAL FORCES UNIT OF WORLD WAR II
BY GAVIN MORTIMER IS AVAILABLE FROM 12 OCTOBER 2023 FROM OSPREY PUBLISHING

Who was Mary Seacole?

Uncover the life of Britain's Caribbean nursing heroine

Written by Emily Staniforth

In 2004, Mary Seacole was voted the greatest Black Briton. Remembered for her work nursing the sick and wounded during the Crimean War, she is idolised by many who view her as a pioneer of nursing and as an inspirational Black female figure in British history. Often compared to and overshadowed by the Lady of the Lamp, Florence Nightingale, little is known about much of Seacole's life. However, what we do know about her paints a picture of a hugely enterprising and generous woman who made her mark in a way that no other Black woman of her time was able to. So, who really was Mary Seacole and how did she come to occupy such a prestigious position in Victorian England?

Life in Jamaica

Historians know very little about Seacole's origins in Jamaica. One of the reasons for this, according to Seacole's biographer Helen Rappaport, is that Seacole herself made very little of her Jamaican roots in her own memoir *The Wonderful Adventures Of Mrs Seacole In Many Lands*, which she wrote after the Crimean War. "The problem with Mary Seacole's early life is that the only account we have of it comes from her memoir which is not an autobiography - it only covers about five and a half years of her life - and in that she draws a complete veil, deliberately, over her birth origins, her parents and her childhood. She gets to the age of 45 inside about four pages, so we know very little about Mary's early life that she tells us," explains Rappaport.

EXPERT BIO

HELEN RAPPAPORT

Helen Rappaport is a British author and historian specialising in Victorian Britain. She is the author of *In Search Of Mary Seacole: The Making Of A Cultural Icon* (Simon & Schuster UK, 2022).

What we do know about Mary Seacole is that she was born Mary Grant in Kingston, Jamaica around 1805. Her mother was a free Jamaican woman of colour and her father was a Scottish soldier. Rappaport explains that Seacole did not give more information about her background because she was an illegitimate child. It was not unusual in Jamaica at that time for white men, especially visiting military men, to father children with Jamaican women according to Rappaport, and many of these men gave their children their surnames and provided for them financially. However, we do not know if this was the case with Seacole's father because she gives no other information about him. Historians have assumed that his surname was Grant because this was the name Seacole gave as an adult when she married.

Seacole's mother, we do know from Seacole's own writing, was a practitioner of Jamaican traditional medicine known

> "From her mother, Seacole learned about herbal treatments and Jamaican medicine"

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

as a 'doctress'. "That's a native Jamaican woman, often a woman of colour, who was skilled in the arts of using the natural pharmacopoeia of Jamaica to make holistic medicines to treat the sick and to nurse people," says Rappaport. Doctresses were very highly regarded in Jamaica and usually learned their craft and skill from their mothers. Seacole's mother ran a lodging house in Kingston where she nursed the sick, and many of her clients included British military and naval officers. From her mother, Seacole learned about herbal treatments and Jamaican medicine and acquired the training that would set her off on a career path that would see her make a name for herself, not just in Jamaica but abroad too.

Mary the entrepreneur

Following in her mother's entrepreneurial footsteps, Seacole set about forging her own path as a teenager in the 1820s. Not afraid of travel, she journeyed abroad trying to make a living from selling her homemade pickles and preserves, visiting the Bahamas, Cuba and Haiti. Seacole also travelled to Britain in 1823, spending a couple of years living in London and trading her wares as an independent businesswoman. By 1826, however, Seacole had returned to Jamaica where she continued to work as a doctress and saleswoman while also helping her mother run the lodging house.

Ten years later, in 1836, Seacole married Edwin Horatio Hamilton Seacole, a white English merchant living in Jamaica. Though interracial relationships in Jamaica were not uncommon, interracial marriages were very unusual according to Rappaport: "I think the first recorded Black-white marriage in Kingston was around 1813," she says. "Mary's was definitely one of the very first Black-white marriages because normally it never came to that. There probably was a private trade-off going on there because Edwin Seacole, I think, was sickly. He gave [Mary] legitimacy and his name [and in return] she was his nursemaid. Or he was just intensely grateful to her for nursing him because he died not long after they were married. So it was obviously some kind of arrangement – a marriage of convenience."

In the eight years that Mary and Edwin Seacole were married, they relocated and set up a store in Black River, Jamaica, selling and trading goods. However, in around 1844, Edwin Seacole died leaving Mary widowed. Seacole then ran a highly successful lodging house in Kingston and remained there for a good few years. In 1850, however, Seacole's skills as a doctress were put to the test when a cholera outbreak hit Jamaica.

While helping to nurse the sick, Seacole observed the use of different medical techniques and the symptoms being experienced by those with the disease, noting the treatments that were successful. The skills she acquired in treating cholera patients would prove invaluable the following year when she left Kingston for Panama in order to join her brother who had set up a lodging house there. Panama was also dealing with a cholera epidemic, so Seacole's skills were in demand. Contrary to the popular belief that Seacole was purely motivated by her charitable intentions, Rappaport points out that her actions were not exclusively philanthropic. She needed to make a living.

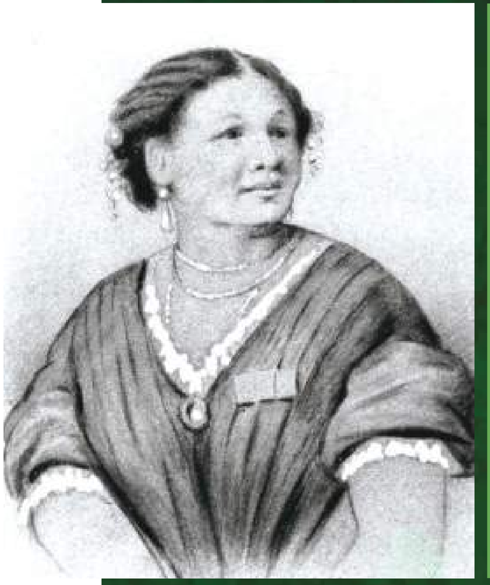
"She went to Panama to run a business. Mary was a wonderful woman and I admire her deeply, but she didn't just go around the world being this sainted figure," she explains. "She went to Panama because her brother had gone out to run some kind of hotel or store or accommodation and also, she knew that her skills were going to be called on because cholera and yellow fever were absolutely rampant. They were killing not just the Panamanians, but mainly the Jamaican workers who had gone there to work on the isthmus railway."

Rappaport continues: "The minute she got to Cruces, where she based herself, word got round all the American gold prospectors doing the shortcut across the isthmus to get round and up to California, and they all went to Mary to be treated and cared for. So by default she was much called on to nurse people with sickness in Panama. But she fundamentally went there to run a business."

The Crimean War

When war broke out in the Crimea in October 1853, Seacole saw an opportunity to help those in need while also monetising the talents she had been honing as a doctress and herbalist. Offering her services to the British War Office, Seacole wanted to travel out to the Crimean Peninsula to help treat injured soldiers and those affected by diseases like dysentery and cholera, which were rife in the British camps. But Seacole was turned

> "Determined to get out to Crimea, Seacole decided to fund the venture herself"



Mary's MEDICINE

What surprising ingredients did Seacole rely on to treat the sick?

Mustard

Proving to be a highly effective ingredient in a number of Seacole's treatments, she used mustard seeds in several different ways. By crushing the seeds up into a paste, she could treat poor circulation and encourage warmth in her patients when the blended seeds were rubbed into the skin. She also made mustard into poultices that she would use to help treat cramps and aching joints, as well as giving it to patients as an emetic to make them vomit.

Mercury

Though highly poisonous, Seacole reported that she used mercury to treat some external conditions. Though she does not give specifics, mercury was used by medics in the 19th century as a treatment for conditions like eczema and psoriasis.

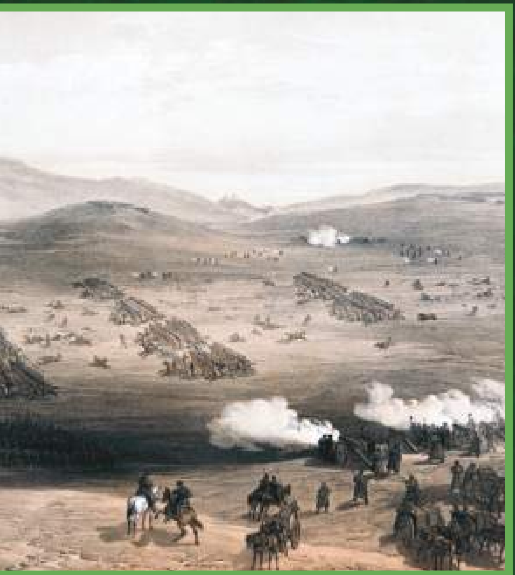
Pomegranate

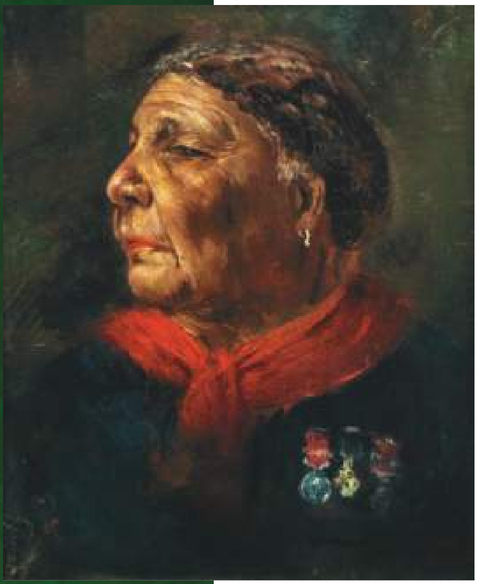
Used by many Jamaican doctresses and medics, pomegranate was a key ingredient used by Seacole in Crimea. It was effective in treating conditions such as dysentery and diarrhoea, which many of the soldiers suffered from. Additionally, the bark of the pomegranate could also be utilised by Seacole, by grinding it into a paste and giving it as a laxative. Pomegranates, unlike some of Seacole's other medicinal ingredients, were widely available in Crimea.

Fresh air

While we are aware of the benefits of fresh air in helping to treat sickness nowadays, Seacole was a firm believer in ensuring her patients were exposed to the circulation of fresh air in order to help them recover. She also placed an emphasis on imposing good hygiene practices.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

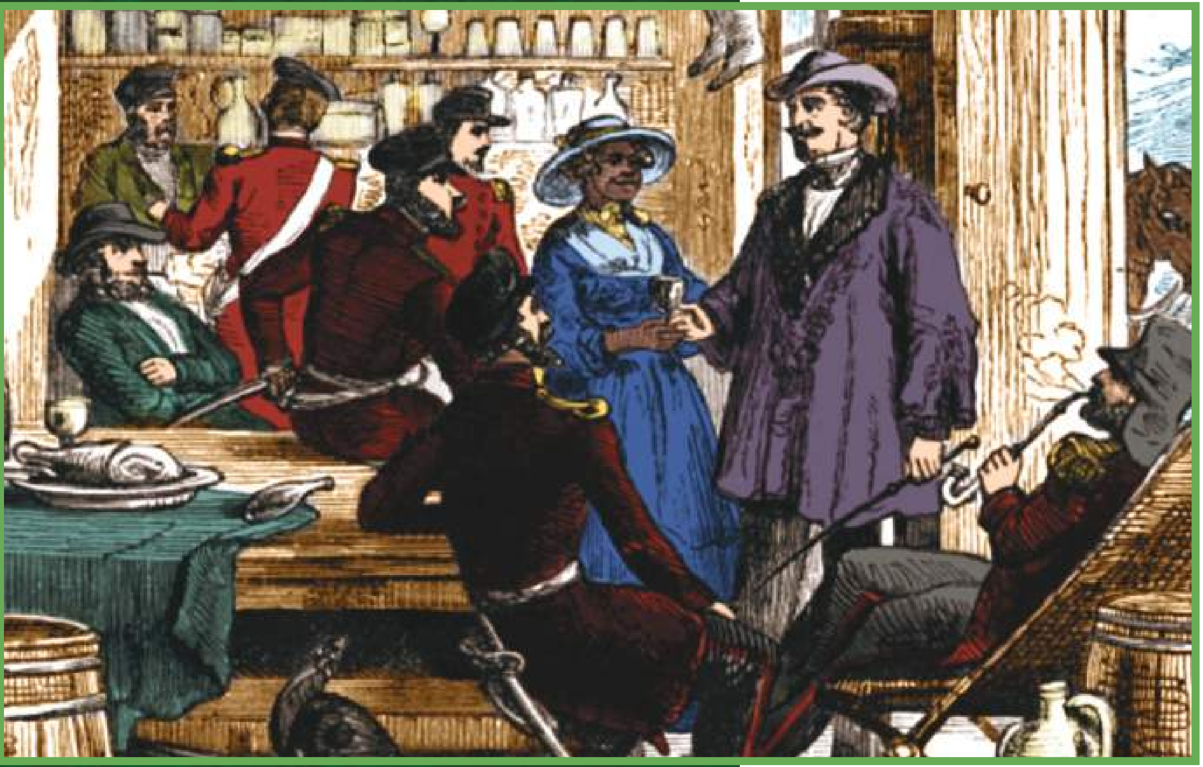




FAR-LEFT A drawing of Mary Seacole

MIDDLE-LEFT This painting shows the Charge of the Light Brigade during the Battle of Balaclava in 1854, which would have happened near Mrs Seacole's

LEFT The subject of this portrait was recently identified by Helen Rappaport as Mary Seacole



ABOVE An illustration of Seacole in her store in Crimea

LEFT The statue of Mary Seacole, unveiled in 2016, outside St Thomas' Hospital in London

down. Her rejection, like that of two other West Indian women who volunteered, was clearly down to racial prejudice.

Determined to get out to Crimea, Seacole decided to fund the venture herself and establish her own catering establishment where she could also offer to treat the wounded and sick. However, this would have not been easy for her in a financial sense as her business ventures had not all been entirely successful and she had lost a lot of money in Panama speculating in a gold mine. But, along with her business partner Thomas Day, Seacole made her way to Crimea and set up an establishment near the Land Transport Camp. Seacole grandly called it the British Hotel, but it was more commonly referred to by the soldiers in Crimea as "Mrs Seacole's", and was situated at Spring Hill a couple of miles north of Balaclava and close to the British army's headquarters. There she provided care and food and sold products to the soldiers who needed her assistance.

"In Crimea if [the soldiers] knew one thing, they knew Mrs Seacole's," says Rappaport. "You could go there for hot coffee and a hot dinner and in the summer cooling drinks. If you had an infection, you could go there and Mary would look at it. It was an absolute godsend to everyone in the area. And of course, there was the storehouse as well where she sold a huge range of goods." Mrs Seacole's became such a well-known and important landmark in Crimea that it was even featured on some of the campaign maps of the time.

Seacole was hugely admired by the men she treated in Crimea and thus made a name for herself in Britain. In 1857, the year after the end of the war in Crimea, *The Times* reported that "her hut was surrounded every morning by the rough navvies and Land Transport men, who had faith in her proficiency in the healing art, which she justified by many cures and by removing obstinate cases of diarrhoea, and similar camp maladies." She came to be known not just as "Mrs Seacole" but as "Mother Seacole", an endearing moniker for a beloved figure in the camps.

The importance of race

Though it may seem surprising that a woman of colour would receive such a warm reception from predominantly white soldiers in the 19th century, it is important to remember that many of the officers who encountered Seacole in Crimea may well have been treated by Creole doctresses when sent out to the Caribbean during their careers. Some of the troops had even been looked after in Kingston by Seacole herself. "One of the reasons she

▶

particularly wanted to go to Crimea was that soldiers from her favourite regiments were being sent to Crimea," explains Rappaport. "She had known them when they were based in Jamaica, and they had come and visited her boarding house there: come to her for treatment and for hot dinners. So they were thrilled when she suddenly turned up in Crimea. Mother Seacole was just like a beacon." The officers loved and accepted her because of the great kindness and affection she showed in her care of them.

Seacole herself had a very specific view of her own race, remarking in her memoir about the lightness of her own skin compared to others who had much darker skin. Her Scottish heritage and her mother's status as a free Black woman in Jamaica certainly helped to give Seacole a higher social standing in white British society. "Mary was extremely ingratiating with her white upper class and aristocratic patrons. She wanted to be one of them. She wanted to be accepted as a lady, but I think she knew she never could because she wasn't white," says Rappaport.

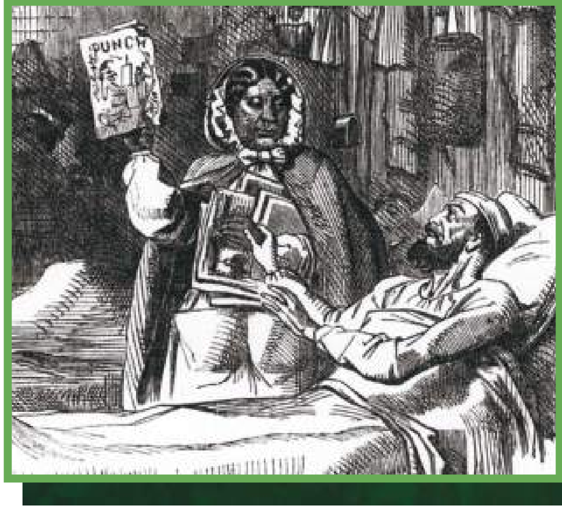
Mary vs Florence

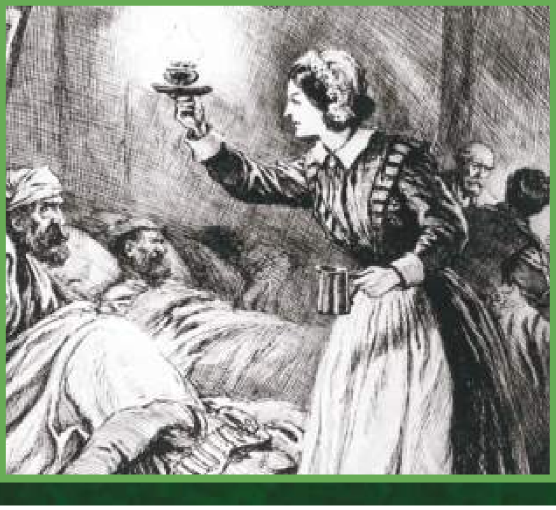
Why was Seacole not as well remembered as her white counterpart?

People still try to make comparisons between the two nursing heroines of the Crimean War, but actually they had very little to do with each other and had very different methods of nursing the sick and wounded. So why has Florence Nightingale been memorialised while Mary Seacole was forgotten?

Helen Rappaport explains: "The main reason Mary didn't have the same posthumous legacy is very obvious. Florence Nightingale had shops, pubs, roads, streets, institutions and statues all over Britain. She set up women's nursing at St Thomas' Hospital, she wrote the standard textbook, *Notes On Nursing* and other learned papers. She left 14,000 letters. Florence Nightingale had an archive and a paper trail and a huge legacy. Queen Victoria revered her and the country worshipped her. Mary, for as long as the veterans who knew her were alive, was loved and remembered and visited. But the trouble is, Mary's story was largely an oral one that was passed down. There are only two known existing manuscript letters [of Mary's] surviving and two more published ones. None of Mary's personal papers survived. Once Mary died, and as the veterans died, her memory got lost."

"Also racial attitudes certainly impinged on it," she adds. "There was every reason to celebrate and perpetuate the memory of Nightingale, because everything was named after her, so Mary got sidelined. She was remembered in a couple of Christian collections about heroic women but then her memory fell away. She wasn't really talked about again until there was a little flurry of interest in her in Jamaica in the 1930s. But the first real mention of her again in Britain was on the 100th anniversary [of the Crimean War]."





Back in Britain

After the Crimean War ended, Seacole settled in Britain. However, the sudden end to the war had bankrupted her. She was left with a great deal of unsold stock and with many unpaid debts from officers and war reporters who had not paid their bills. She had also funded her medical care of the sick and wounded who solicited her help without asking for payment and she returned to England penniless. However, she was held in such high esteem by the British army for her activities in Crimea that they, along with others who had heard of the care Seacole had provided through extensive newspaper coverage of her exploits, wanted to help her.

In an attempt to help raise the money to pay off Seacole's debts, a benefit gala was organised in 1857. According to the Mary Seacole Trust, over 80,000 people attended the event in London, and those who aided the cause included military generals and members of the British royal family. Unfortunately, the promoters of the event went bankrupt soon after and Seacole received very little money. She therefore wrote and published her memoir in the same year to help get out of debt.

Seacole continued to work, unofficially, as a doctress and travel for the remainder of her life and in 1867 a second Seacole Fund was set up to help with her funds.

> "Mother Seacole was just like a beacon"

Her wish to be accepted by the upper classes of England was certainly realised as she treated both Princess Alexandra of Wales and Count Gleichen (the nephew of Queen Victoria), the latter of whom she had nursed in Crimea. For many years, Seacole continued to be a well-known and recognisable figure in British society, a position that was unique for a woman of colour in Victorian England.

Mary Seacole died in 1881 in Paddington. For a long time after her death, the work she did and the fondness with which she was remembered sadly became lost to history as the generation of people that knew and respected her ceased to exist. However, her legacy has been restored over the last few years as interest in Britain's Black history has exploded.

Around 90 years after her death, a group of Jamaican nurses found and restored Seacole's grave and a campaign began to immortalise Seacole in a memorial statue. Now, that statue, erected in 2016, stands proudly outside St Thomas' Hospital in London. Her memory and the vital and unique place she holds in British history continues to be restored through the research of historians, like Helen Rappaport, and through her inclusion in the British school curriculum. Of Seacole's legacy, Rappaport says: "Mary Seacole has become a source of inspiration to many who work in the NHS and healthcare – both Black and white – for her informal, compassionate methods that always put the patient first. She did not conform to any standard formal nursing practice but relied on her instincts and the knowledge and skills passed down to her by her mother. Her hands-on care of the sick, given freely, without question epitomises her fundamental belief in never turning away anyone who needed her help. She is the archetypal Good Samaritan." ○

All images © Getty Images

SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR OVERSEAS READERS

3 ISSUES FOR $/€5

WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE

THE OTHER SAS
Revealing the WWII unit lost to secrecy
BLACK PRINCE OF FLORENCE
ALL ABOUT HISTORY
SALEM
How fear, fanaticism and vengeance fuelled the brutal witch trials
ANCIENT ROYAL SCANDALS
Nine throne-threatening tales you need to know
RIVALS OF EGYPT
Why the pharaohs feared the Kingdom of Kush
NURSE PIONEER
Discover the remarkable life of Mary Seacole
PANDEMIC & PREJUDICE
Inside the AIDS crisis and the fight for justice

The magazine that brings the past to life!

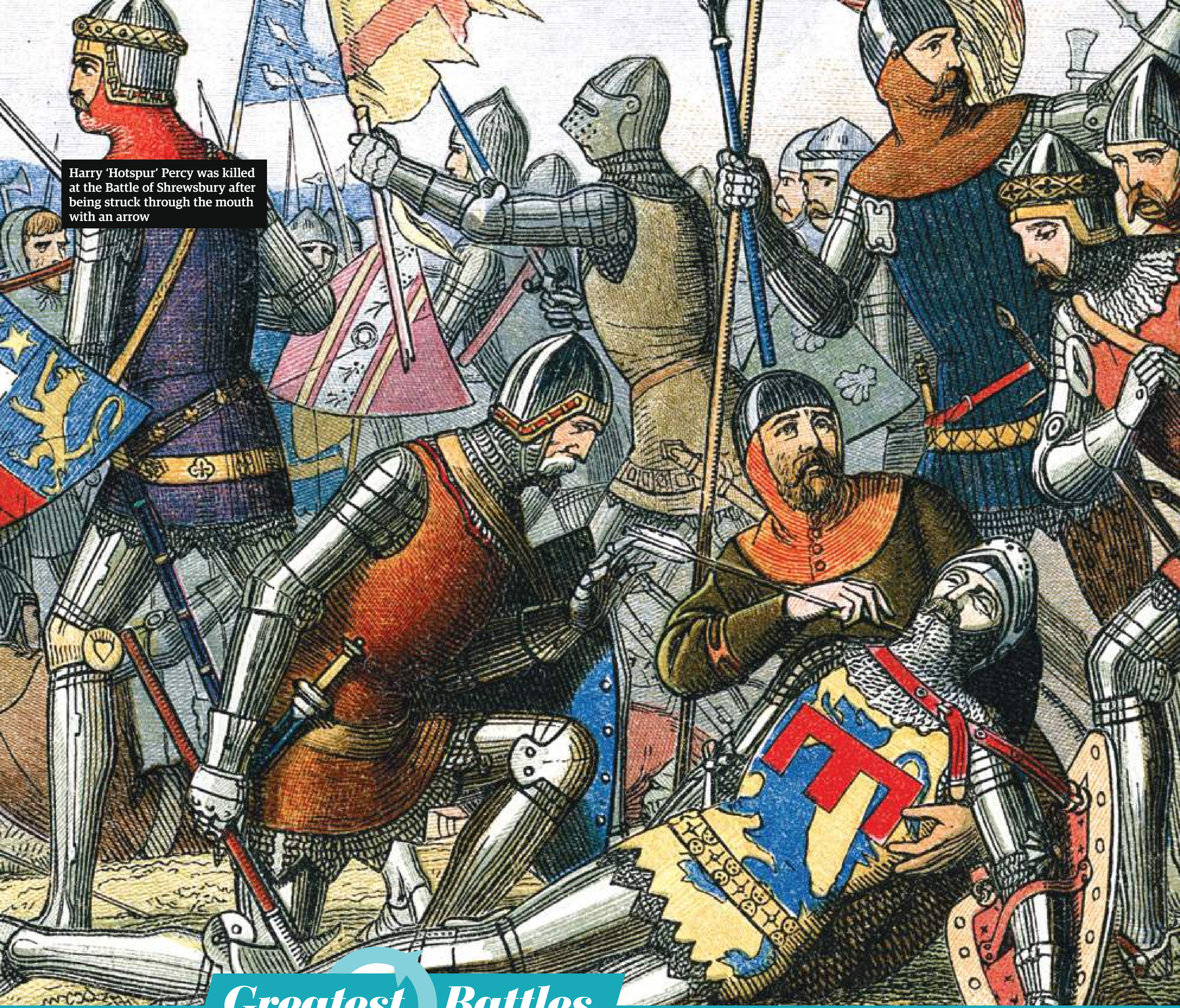
HISTORY OF COMPUTERS
ALL ABOUT HISTORY
GODS OF EGYPT
ALL ABOUT HISTORY
DEADLY FASHION
Rise of the MONGOLS
GALILEO THE HERETIC
SECRET SOCIETIES
ALL ABOUT HISTORY
TESLA
HOW TO WIN A WAR
TRANS HISTORY
ALL ABOUT HISTORY
BEYOND THE MYTHS
TROY

AMAZING INTRODUCTORY OFFER

Order hotline **+44 (0) 330 333 1113** and quote **B85N**

Online at **magazinesdirect.com/aah/B85N**

***Terms and conditions** Offer closes 21.12.2023. Offer open to new overseas subscribers only. Pay only $/€5 for your first three issues, then after your trial period ends, your subscription will continue at the price shown at the point of purchase. Savings are based on the annual subscription rate and the cover price. We will notify you in advance of any price changes. Please allow up to eight weeks for delivery of your first subscription issue. For full terms and conditions, visit www.magazinesdirect.com/terms. For enquiries please call: +44 (0) 330 333 1113. Lines are open Monday-Friday 8:30am-7pm and Saturday 10am-3pm UK time (excluding Bank Holidays) or email help@magazinesdirect.com. Calls to 0330 numbers will be charged at no more than a national landline call, and may be included in your phone provider's call bundle.



Harry 'Hotspur' Percy was killed at the Battle of Shrewsbury after being struck through the mouth with an arrow

Greatest Battles

BATTLE OF SHREWSBURY

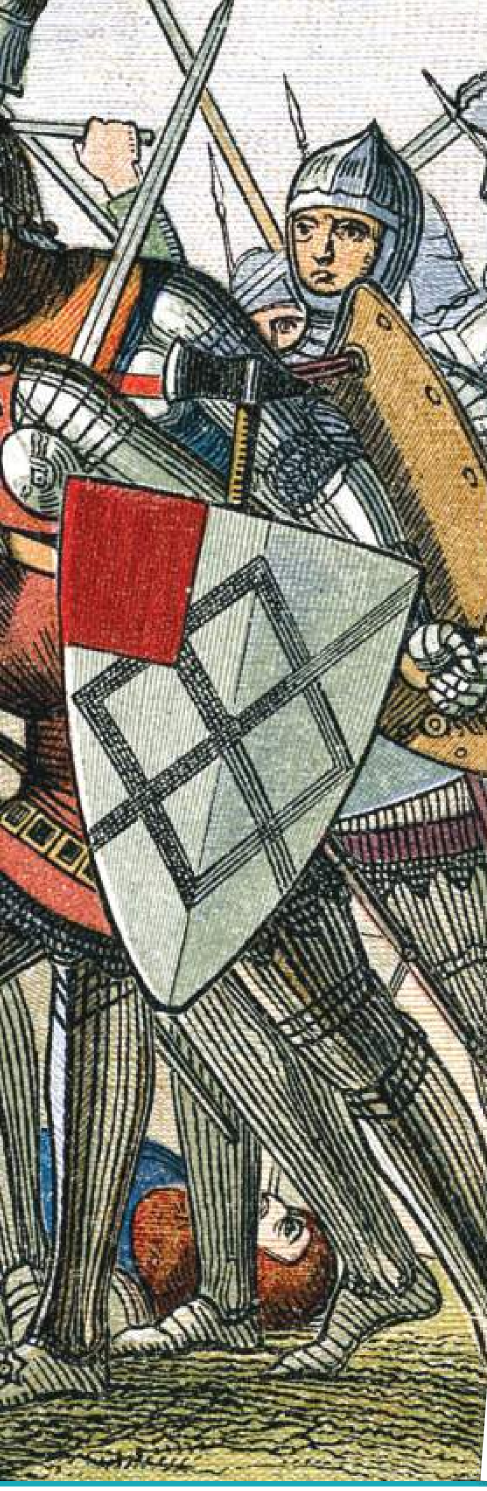
SHREWSBURY, SHROPSHIRE, ENGLAND, 21 JULY 1403

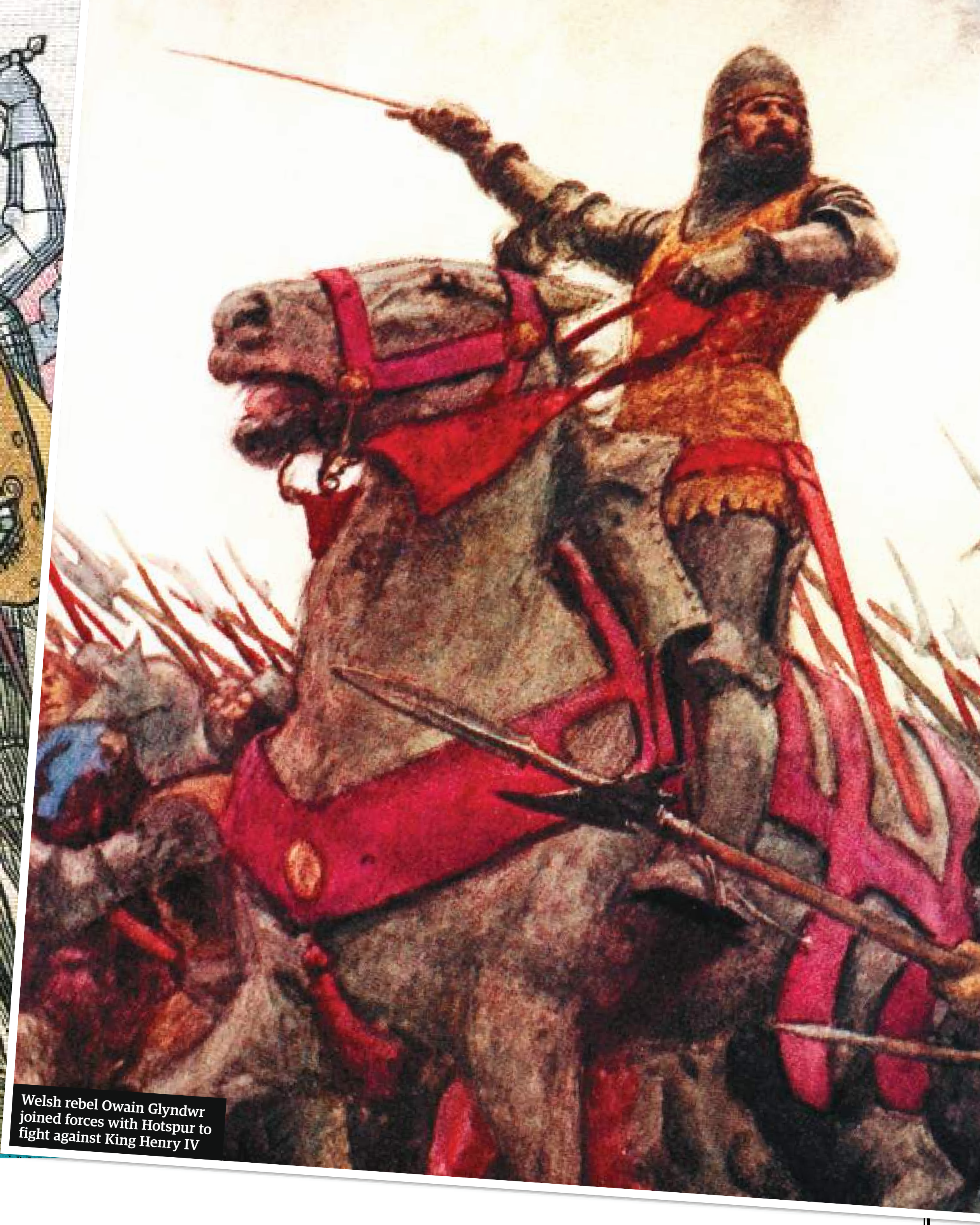
Written by Nick Soldinger

On the night of 21 July 1403, a 16-year-old soldier was carried into the candlelit sanctuary of Shrewsbury Abbey with a bloodied rag pressed against his face. Shortly before, he'd been evacuated from a nearby battlefield when an arrow had hit him just a little below his right eye.

Ordinarily, the young man would have been left to die. After all, this was medieval Britain, hundreds of years before the advent of anaesthetics, military surgeons or combat medics. The wounded teenager, however, was no ordinary soldier. He was Prince Hal, eldest son of King Henry IV and heir to the throne of England.

The origins of the Battle of Shrewsbury, in which Hal had just fought, could be traced back to the reign of the previous monarch, Richard II. His





Welsh rebel Owain Glyndwr joined forces with Hotspur to fight against King Henry IV

22-year grip on power had been characterised by revolts, tyranny and treason and was eventually cut short in 1399 after his cousin Henry Bolingbroke staged a coup d'état. Richard was then locked away in Pontefract Castle, where he was starved to death, while Bolingbroke had himself crowned King Henry IV in his place.

Although Bolingbroke led the powerful House of Lancaster, he could never have pulled off this act of treason without some heavyweight help. Among those who'd backed him was the Percy family from Northumbria, whose eldest son Harry 'Hotspur' soon became Henry's henchman-in-chief.

One important source of income for these supporters' families came from ransoming hostages captured in battle. Hotspur's allegiance to Henry IV had less to do with loyalty than it did with the opportunity it presented for gaining greater wealth and power.

In 1402, after routing a Scottish uprising on behalf of Henry IV, he took over 80 noblemen prisoner. Among them was the powerful Earl of Douglas, for whom he hoped to get a substantial ransom. The king, however, believed the likes of Douglas posed less of a threat if they remained in royal custody, so he demanded that Hotspur hand his hostages over to the crown.

Things were already tense between Henry IV and the Percy family. The king still owed the clan £20,000 for their help in seizing power. Meanwhile, land in Cumbria that he'd promised them had instead been handed over to his relatives the Neville family. For Hotspur, the king's latest demand, which would deprive him of his rightful spoils of war, was a step too far. Not only did Hotspur refuse to hand over his hostages, but he also began planning a coup of his own. In a move that sounds like a storyline from *Game Of Thrones*, Hotspur now persuaded his hostage the Earl of Douglas to join his uprising against his former boss. He then made a pact with Welsh rebel Owain Glyndwr, whom he'd also previously fought on behalf of the king, and began working on a coordinated campaign to bring Henry down.

THE REBELLION BEGINS

In the event, it was Glyndwr's forces that struck first. On 6 July 1403, his troops seized Carmarthen Castle, igniting a Welsh insurgency that stretched along the border. By this time, Hotspur was marching south from Northumberland, gathering a

All images: © Alamy

rebel army around him as he went, and arriving in the city of Chester, in Cheshire, on 9 July.

Among the forces that flocked to his ranks were the Cheshire archers. These bowmen had played a famous role in the English victories over the French at the battles of Crécy in 1346 and Poitiers in 1356. Battle-hardened and highly trained, their martial skills were so valued that they weren't just well paid for their services but were often considered above the law, sometimes quite literally getting away with murder. Richard II had appointed them as his personal bodyguard in the dying days of his regime. As Hotspur now discovered, many still wore Richard's symbol, the white hart (stag), on their distinctive green and white tabards in defiance of the new king.

Hotspur now marched south, crossing over the border from Cheshire into Shropshire. He aimed to seize its most important town, Shrewsbury, which Prince Hal was defending with a small force. By now, Henry IV was also at the head of an army. Having received news of Hotspur's treachery, he raced towards Shrewsbury from the east. He reached it on 20 July to link up with his son, just hours before the rebel army were soon to appear on the horizon.

With the Earl of Northumberland's army still in the north and Glyndwr's troops still fighting in Wales, Hotspur's army of 10,000 found itself facing a royal force closer to 14,000. With his men outnumbered, Hotspur set up camp in the village of Berwick, 5km north of Shrewsbury, to wait for reinforcements to arrive. Henry IV, however, was in no mood to hang around.

The following morning, on 21 July, the king marched his army out of Shrewsbury and headed east. Its mission was to outflank Hotspur's troops, sweep around behind them and sever their line of retreat back to Cheshire.

Hotspur soon got wind of his plan, however, so broke camp and also moved east in search of a better defensive position. He found it at a ridge overlooking farmland that was known locally as Hateley Field.

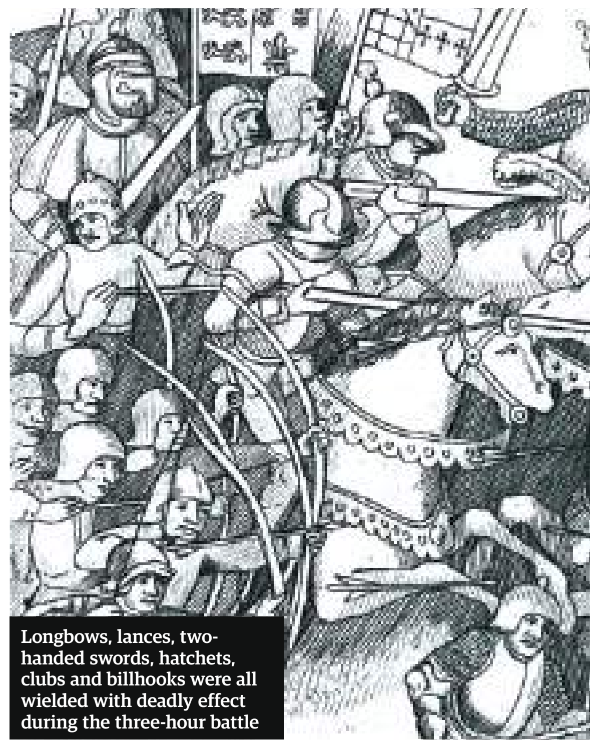
In the mid-afternoon before the two sides eventually encountered each other, a parlay was organised but talks soon failed, and two hours before dusk the king gave the signal for the battle to begin. On dropping his raised hand, his longbow archers sent a storm of arrows into the rebel ranks. No sooner had they found their first targets than the king's vanguard on the right flank charged forward led by the Earl of Stafford. The Cheshire archers now raised their longbows and aimed them downhill in the direction of the troops.

DEATH FROM ABOVE

The Battle of Shrewsbury was the first time that two English armies would use the longbow to deadly effect against each other. Although other European countries were slow to appreciate the potential of this unique weapon, the English had long appreciated its deadly use. A good longbow took great skill and effort to make, while mastering the technique to use it effectively took years. The longbow itself was carved and shaped from a single two-metre piece of yew that often stood taller than the man holding it. The arrows it used, which were up to 90cm long, were accurate up to 230m and lethal at 90m.

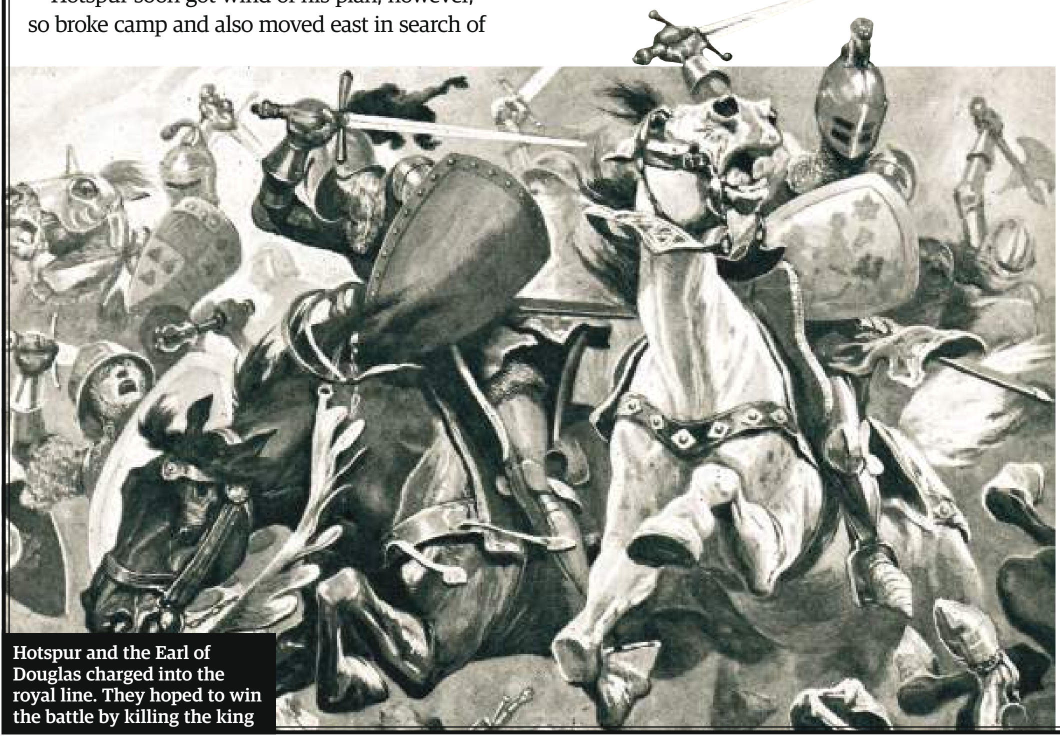
In the early stages of a battle, longbow archers didn't aim directly into enemy troops – they would launch arrow storms into the sky that, much like an artillery barrage, would rain death down on the enemy lines in continuous waves.

It's been claimed that an accomplished archer of the era could let off 12 or more arrows a minute. Given that it required around 45kg of force to pull back the bowstring each time, about half this number seems like a more realistic rate, especially when you consider the limited number of arrows each archer could carry. But even at six arrows a minute a massed barrage could still deliver a knockout blow.



Longbows, lances, two-handed swords, hatchets, clubs and billhooks were all wielded with deadly effect during the three-hour battle

Image source: wiki/National Library of Wales



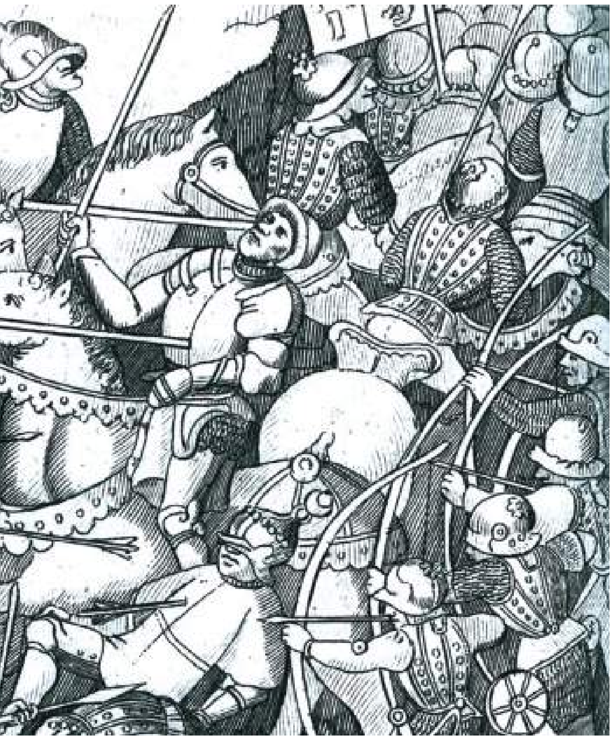
Hotspur and the Earl of Douglas charged into the royal line. They hoped to win the battle by killing the king

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

If Hotspur had 4,000 longbowmen with him at Shrewsbury, as has been estimated, then in the opening minute of their advance Stafford's men would have come under fire from at least 24,000 arrows. Despite this aerial onslaught, Stafford and his men somehow reached the rebel lines. Brutal hand-to-hand combat broke out as soldiers pummelled each other with two-handed swords, war hammers, hatchets, clubs and billhooks. Somewhere in the middle of this chaos the Earl of Douglas found Stafford and, after a brief fight, hacked him to the ground. With their leader dead, what remained of the vanguard now fled and Hotspur, whose impetuousness in battle had earned him his nickname, then ordered his men to charge after them.

Perhaps smelling victory, he now led a band of mounted knights towards the centre of the royal army from where Henry IV had been seen commanding the battle. His men slashed a corridor through the swirling turmoil amid screams and shouts as arrows continued to rain down from both sides. On reaching the centre, the Earl of Douglas killed the king's standard bearer, Sir Walter Blount, while Hotspur and his knights surrounded a man they believed to be Henry IV. As he, too, was slain a victory shout went up in the rebel ranks. The dead man, however, was a decoy, as several men had been dressed in the king's livery before the battle to confuse the enemy.

The king now rallied his troops, shouting that he was still alive and declaring Hotspur to be dead. And it was true. At some point in the fighting, Hotspur had raised his helmet's visor, perhaps to shout an order, and was struck through the mouth with an arrow and killed. As word of his death spread, his troops tried to run only for many to be cut down as they fled the battlefield. The fighting



finally petered out as night fell after three hours of mortal combat. By the time the battlefield fell silent, between 1,600-2,000 men lay dead or dying, littered over a five-kilometre (three-mile) area.

The surviving rebel leaders were all soon rounded up, including the wounded Earl of Douglas, who'd lost a testicle in the fighting. Spared, he remained a prisoner of the crown until Henry IV's death in 1413. Thomas Percy, Hotspur's uncle, however, was not so lucky. After being executed, his severed head was then displayed on a spike at London Bridge.

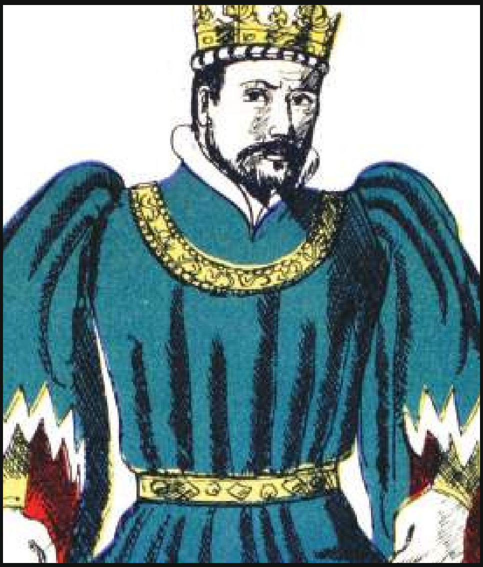
Hotspur's corpse, meanwhile, suffered an even more grisly fate. Initially mounted on a spear in Shrewsbury town centre, it was then quartered so its four parts could be sent to Chester, Bristol, Newcastle and London for public exhibition. His severed head, meanwhile, was put on show in York where it was shown to his father, the Earl of Northumberland, whom Henry IV had summoned to the city.

By then, the Percy family no longer presented an immediate threat to his regime but still possessed enough clout to be of use in containing the Scots. So Henry, ever the pragmatist, pardoned Northumberland for his part in the uprising. For the same reason, he also spared the surviving rebel troops, including the Cheshire archers.

THE FATE OF PRINCE HAL

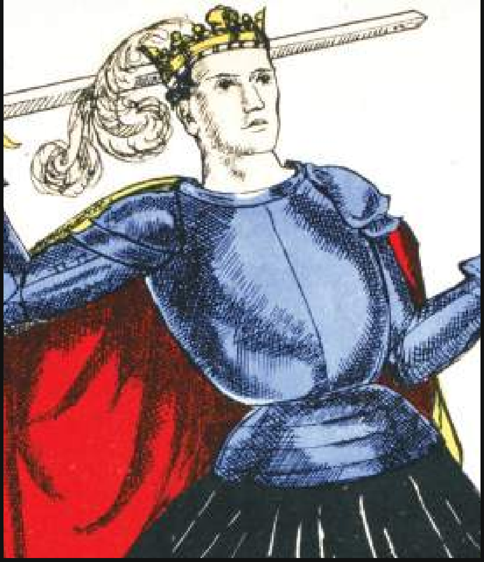
Despite his young age, Prince Hal had been given command of troops on his father's left flank at the start of the battle. At the height of the fighting, as Hotspur's knights had ploughed into the royal lines, the young prince had ordered his men to wheel around the back of the rebel force, encircling them. In the fighting that followed Hal, like Hotspur, had also been hit in the face by an arrow when he'd opened his visor. That arrow, however, hadn't killed him and he'd continued to command his troops until the fighting was over. It was only when the day was won that he finally sought assistance for

HENRY IV'S ARMY



HENRY IV OF ENGLAND

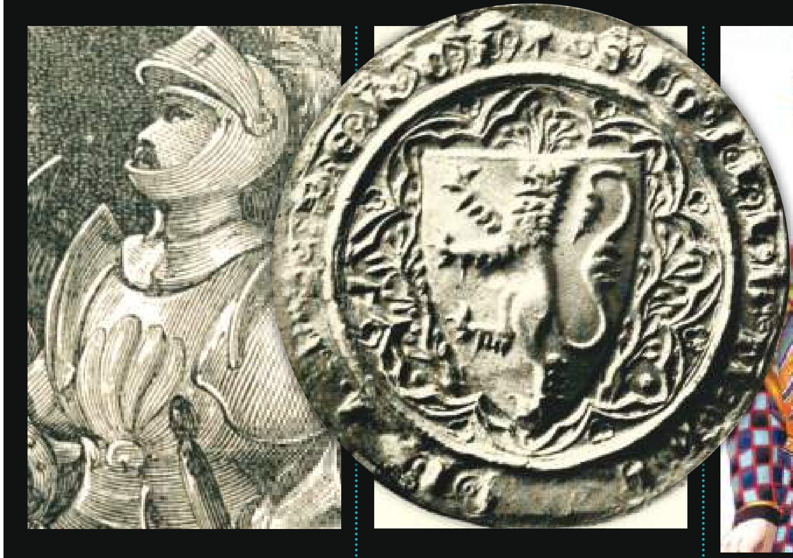
The son of John of Gaunt, Henry had been king of England since 1399 having overthrown his cousin Richard II. Prior to Shrewsbury, he had already had to handle the Welsh uprising led by Owain Glyndŵr. However, his son the Prince of Wales took over from him in running the government from 1410 as his health failed.



HENRY, PRINCE OF WALES

The future Henry V would enjoy his own personal victories as monarch, but under his father he had fought against the Welsh and the Percy family, earning himself a powerful reputation on the battlefield. He began his reign proper after his father's death in 1413, going on to win a famous victory in the Hundred Years' War at Agincourt.

HOTSPUR'S ARMY

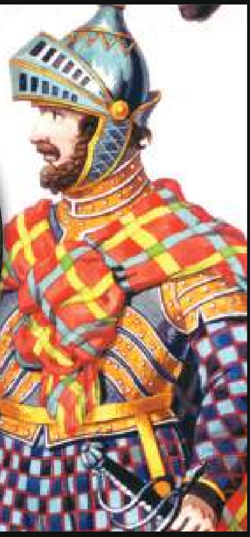


HENRY PERCY

Earning the nickname 'Harry Hotspur' thanks to his swift and decisive leadership in battle, Henry had fought for Henry IV in his efforts to depose Richard II and been involved in battles against the Scots and French. However, increasing grievance with the new king resulted in the Percy family rebelling against Henry IV. He was ultimately killed at Shrewsbury.

THOMAS PERCY

The uncle of Henry Percy, Thomas was 1st Earl of Worcester and had a career in the Navy prior to the rebellion, serving as Admiral of the North and Admiral of the Kings Fleet in Ireland. He had been sent to negotiate with Henry IV before the battle, but the settlement he returned with was rejected. He was captured in battle and beheaded.



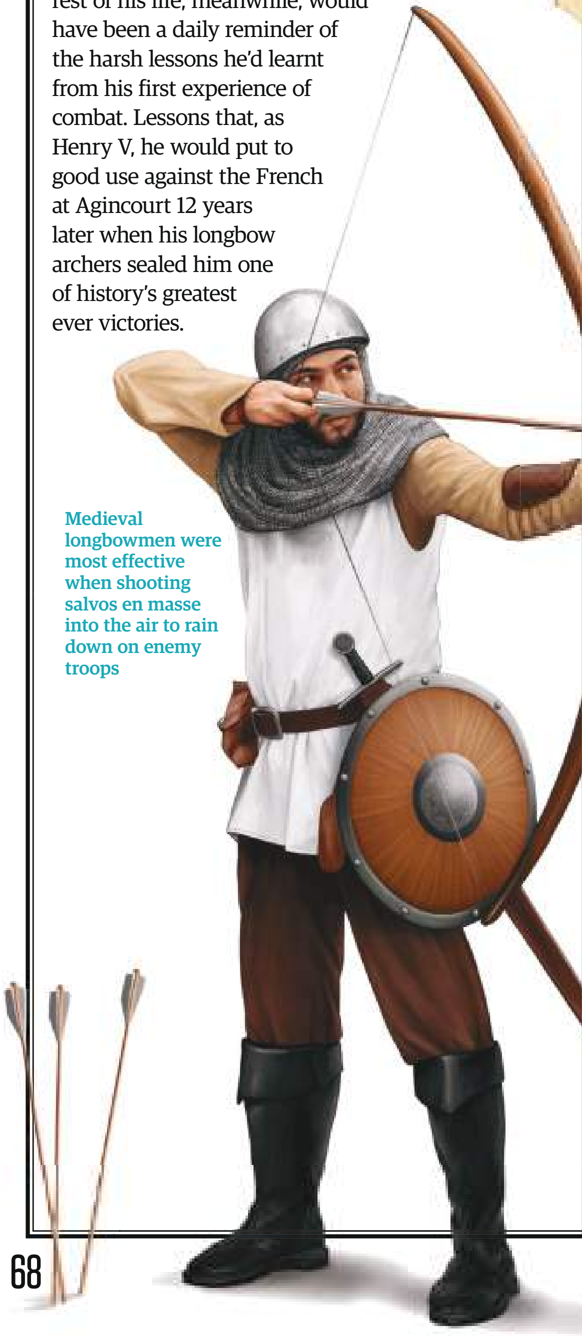
ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS

Henry Percy had captured Douglas and many of his captains at Homildon Hill but having been refused permission to ransom them by Henry IV, the prisoners were set free and decided to join Hotspur in his rebellion. Despite having been wounded and losing an eye, Douglas went into battle again at Shrewsbury and was captured.

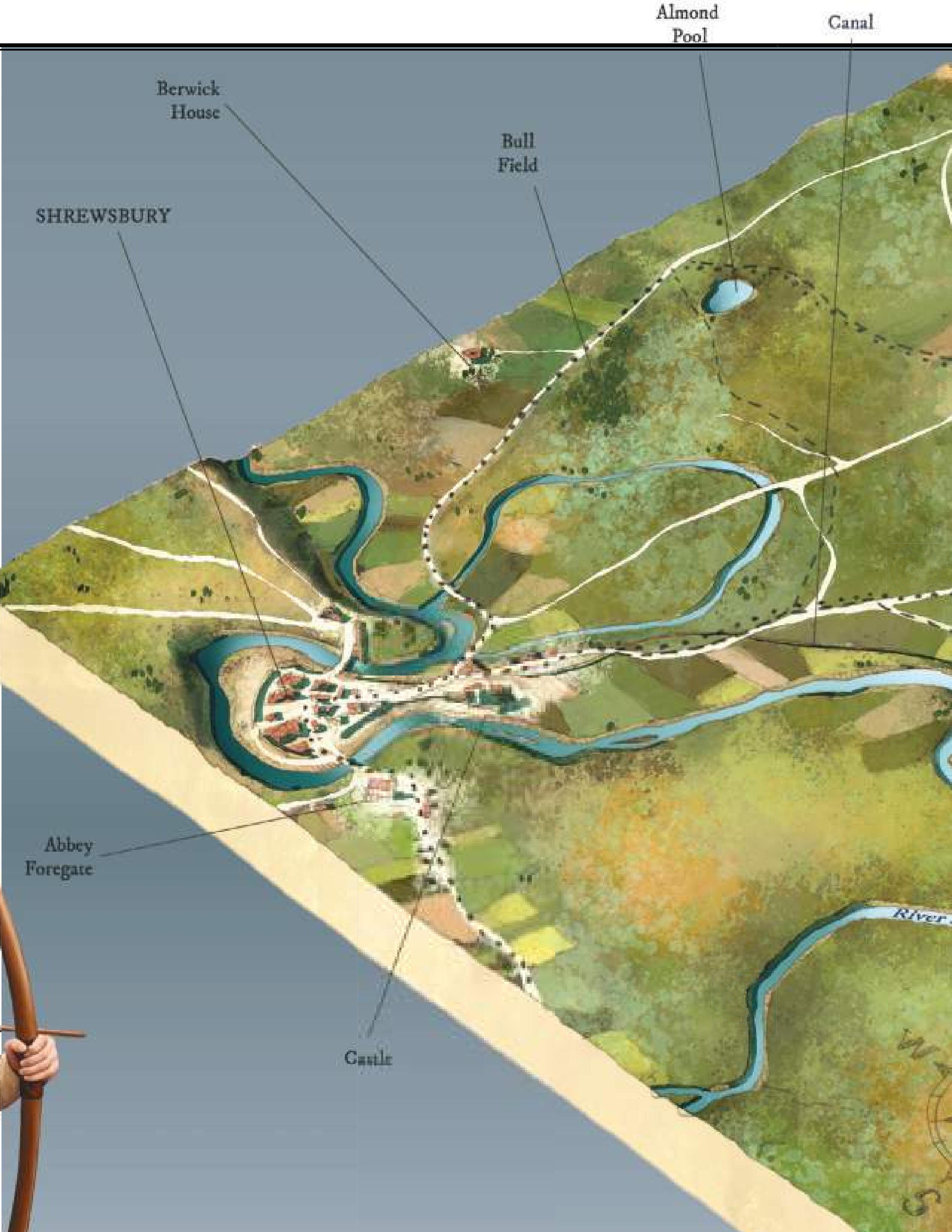
his wound. Although the wooden shaft of the arrow was soon pulled out, its iron head remained lodged deep inside his skull. If it remained there, the wound would turn gangrenous, killing the prince within days.

Initial attempts to treat the wound at Shrewsbury Abbey ranged from the primitive to the superstitious. Various potions and chants were tried but without success. Hal was transferred to Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire nearly 100km to the east, where the renowned surgeon John Bradmore was waiting for him. As horrific as this injury sounds, Prince Hal had been lucky. A few inches higher and the arrow would have pierced his brain, any lower and it would have severed his spinal cord.

Throughout the following surgery, Hal was dosed up with alcohol and a herbal narcotic called henbane. Nevertheless, the pain must have been excruciating. One can only imagine how mentally scarred the procedure would have left him. The horrific facial disfigurement he carried for the rest of his life, meanwhile, would have been a daily reminder of the harsh lessons he'd learnt from his first experience of combat. Lessons that, as Henry V, he would put to good use against the French at Agincourt 12 years later when his longbow archers sealed him one of history's greatest ever victories.



Medieval longbowmen were most effective when shooting salvos en masse into the air to rain down on enemy troops



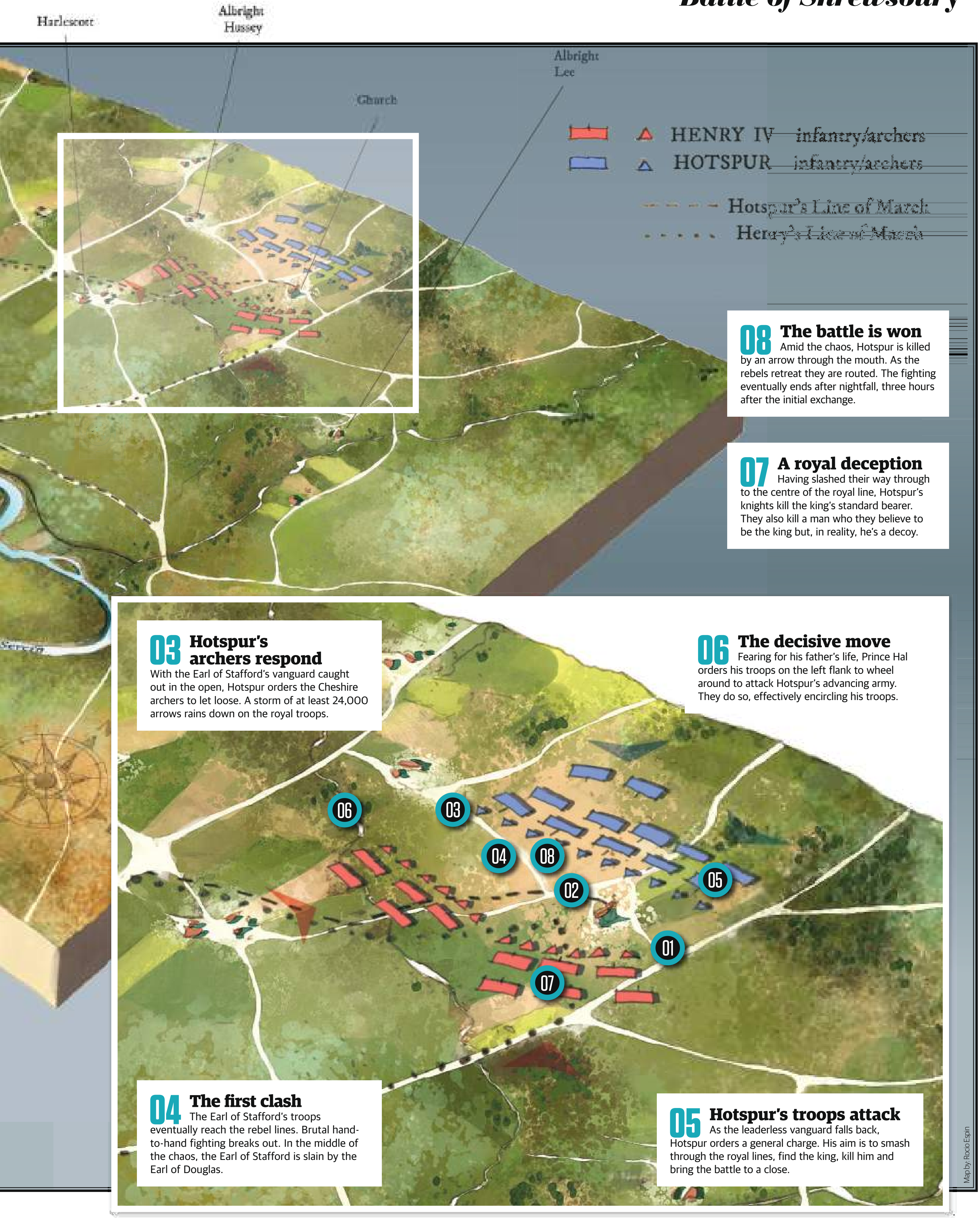
> "THE CHESHIRE ARCHERS' MARTIAL SKILLS WERE SO VALUED THAT THEY WEREN'T JUST WELL PAID FOR THEIR SERVICES BUT WERE OFTEN CONSIDERED ABOVE THE LAW, SOMETIMES QUITE LITERALLY GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER"

01 The battle opens

After last-minute negotiations fail, King Henry IV orders his longbow archers to aim a salvo at Hotspur's 10,000-strong rebel force. It is the first time English archers have fired on English archers.

02 Henry IV's troops attack

In the wake of the initial archery salvo, the royal vanguard under the Earl of Stafford attempts to cross the field to engage the rebel lines. They are slowed down, however, by obstructive rudimentary earthworks.


Harlescott
Albright Hussey
Church
Albright Lee
HENRY IV infantry/archers
HOTSPUR infantry/archers
Hotspur's Line of March
Henry's Line of March
06
03
04
08
02
05
01
07

03 Hotspur's archers respond

With the Earl of Stafford's vanguard caught out in the open, Hotspur orders the Cheshire archers to let loose. A storm of at least 24,000 arrows rains down on the royal troops.

04 The first clash

The Earl of Stafford's troops eventually reach the rebel lines. Brutal hand-to-hand fighting breaks out. In the middle of the chaos, the Earl of Stafford is slain by the Earl of Douglas.

05 Hotspur's troops attack

As the leaderless vanguard falls back, Hotspur orders a general charge. His aim is to smash through the royal lines, find the king, kill him and bring the battle to a close.

06 The decisive move

Fearing for his father's life, Prince Hal orders his troops on the left flank to wheel around to attack Hotspur's advancing army. They do so, effectively encircling his troops.

07 A royal deception

Having slashed their way through to the centre of the royal line, Hotspur's knights kill the king's standard bearer. They also kill a man who they believe to be the king but, in reality, he's a decoy.

08 The battle is won

Amid the chaos, Hotspur is killed by an arrow through the mouth. As the rebels retreat they are routed. The fighting eventually ends after nightfall, three hours after the initial exchange.

Map by: Rocio Espin

What If…

RUSSIA HAD KEPT CALIFORNIA

How Russia could have remained an unwelcome and dangerous neighbour in the USA's backyard

Interview by David J. Williamson

INTERVIEW WITH

© S O'Rourke

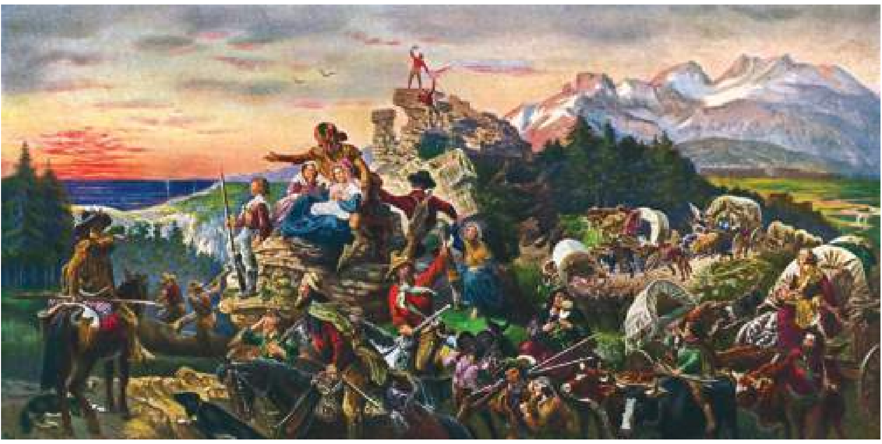
DR SHANE O'ROURKE

Shane O'Rourke is a senior lecturer in Russian history at the University of York. His latest book, *Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna, Princess Isabel And The Ending Of Servile Labour In Russia And Brazil*, is out now.

Ambitious imperialist expansion saw the Russian Empire straddle continents to stake its claim in North America. For the emerging United States, it was a threat to the 'Manifest Destiny' of its western expansion, and free access and control of the Pacific Coast. For the global superpower of Great Britain, its own imperialistic ambitions would be threatened and add to the existing embarrassment of losing its American colonies. By retaining its American territories Russia would be a major player in the region, and a possible game changer, influencing and even dictating the very future of North America as we know it.

How important a bargaining chip would California and other American territories be for Imperial Russia in relations with global powers?
If the Russians had held on to their North American possessions and Hawaii (on which the Russians established forts and briefly considered annexing), it would have given them considerable leverage over the United States and the European Great Powers. The Russians would have had land borders from which to threaten the United States, Canada, and Mexico. For the United States in particular it would have proved a thorny problem, potentially depriving them of the Pacific seaboard and Hawaii as a base for naval operations. The United States would have remained an Atlantic power, formidable still, but not the world power we know today. The US conquests of Mexican territory in the mid-19th century might have been rendered more difficult if the Russians had decided to ally with the Mexicans to prevent further US expansion. Confronting a first-class European power would have stretched US military capacity to its limits before the Civil War. The Civil War would also have provided the Russian Empire with the possibility of intervening on either side from its Californian base. Equally, the Russians could have chosen to supply the native American peoples with modern weapons to thwart US expansion westwards. During the Crimean War Britain's Canadian possessions could have been threatened by Russian forces based in California. At the very least Britain would have had to divert considerable forces to safeguard Canada. A stable Russian base in California would have provided Imperial Russia with the opportunity to fundamentally reshape the global balance of power.

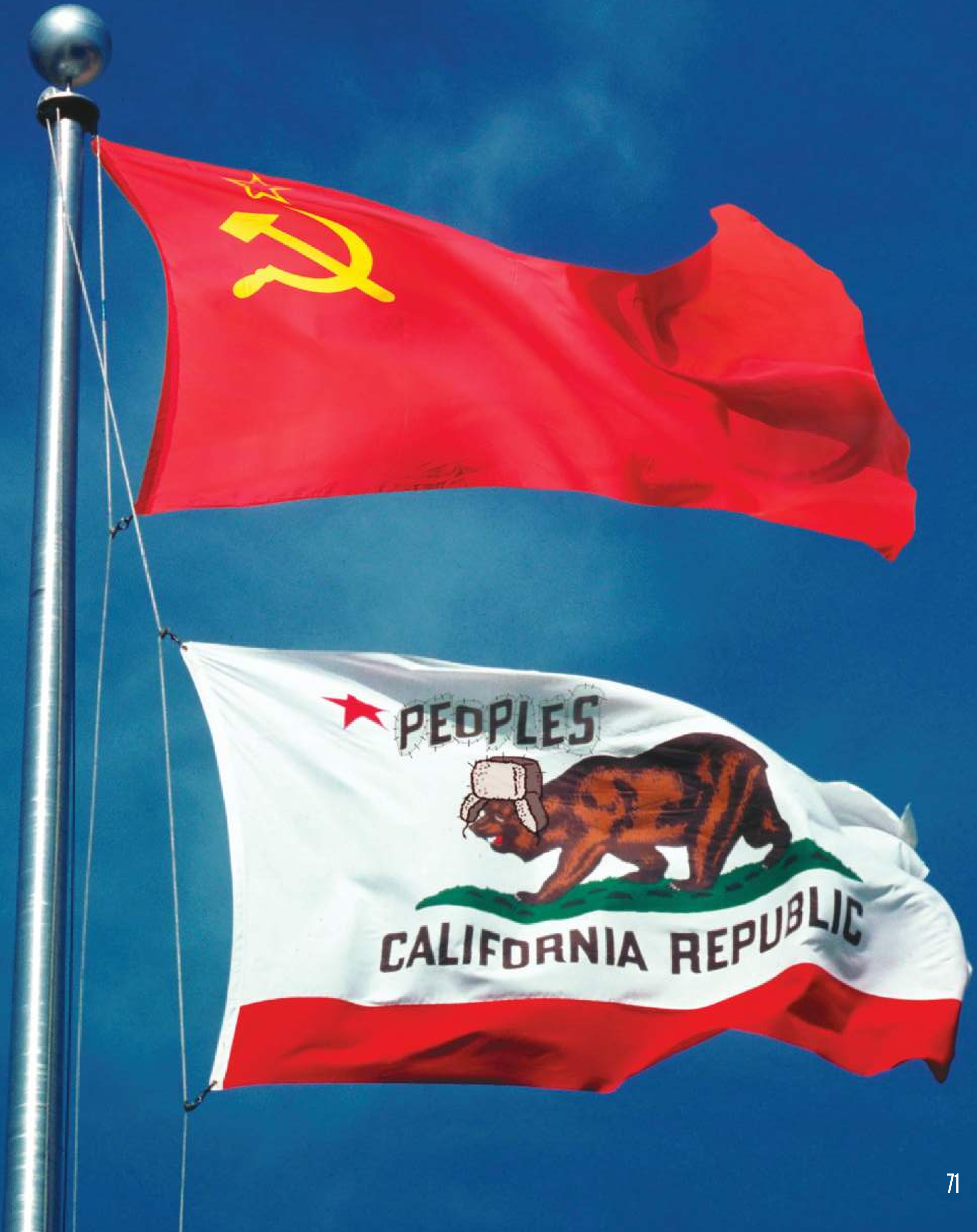
What economic/political/social impact could arise out of a well-established 'Russian America'?
It would have profoundly impacted the US political, economic, and social system. It would have provided a direct challenge to the American democracy by an autocratic government. This would be true under the Imperial regime, the Soviet Union or Putin's Russia today. As we know, autocracy has no shortage of supporters even in democratic countries. Trump might have appealed to Russian forces to help him stay in power. Economically, the Soviet Union would have provided an alternative model of development. During the Great Depression in the 1930s the booming Soviet economy would have extended



© Getty Images

Main image source: © Getty Images

RIGHT
The United States could have looked very different if Russia had retained its American territories


PEOPLES
CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC

THE PAST

1740s

BACKDOOR TO THE NEW WORLD

The Russian Empire had gradually expanded West to East until the narrow passage of sea between the Asian and North American continents was reached. In 1741 the explorers Chirikov and Bering (a Danish navigator after whom the straits and the sea between Asia and America were to be named) made land in what is modern-day Alaska, claiming it for the Russian Empire. Bering himself died soon after and any form of settlement was not immediate, but a route into a new world of possibilities had been made.

1740s – 1840s

FURS AND FAITH

The new world brought the opportunity for trade, and wealth. The quality of sea otter pelts offered rich rewards for the fur trade both in Russia and around the world. In 1799, Tsar Paul I granted a trading charter to the Russian-American Company for all Russian American territories on the North West Pacific coast. The native peoples were often oppressed into doing the hard work, treated with disdain and often violence. Missionaries also arrived, aiming to spread Russian Orthodox Christianity from Alaska down to the very borders with Mexico.

1840s – 1867

SALE OF THE CENTURY

In a bid to consolidate its position, Russia created a number of fortified outposts to stake its claim on territory and protect its trading interests. But as time went on the territories became difficult to govern and trade more competitive with the British and Americans. Treaties had to be signed to cling on to something, but the Russian foothold in North America was slipping. In 1842 Fort Ross in California was sold, and in 1867 Tsar Alexander II agreed the sale of Alaska to the Americans for $7.2 million (approx. $151 million in today's money). The 'Alaska Purchase' ended a Russian dream that had proved to be several steps too far.

United States

to California, attracting the millions left destitute by the collapse of the capitalist economy after the Wall Street Crash in 1929. Socially, a workers' state on its borders might have radicalised the US into becoming a right-wing authoritarian state in response to the threat of a workers' revolution. Alternatively, it could have become a much more social-democratic type of state, as in Europe after World War II, in an attempt to retain the loyalty of the working class. Today, Putin's Russia appeals to a large body of conservative voters who see it as a bastion of traditional values. A Russian California would make that appeal even more potent than it is.

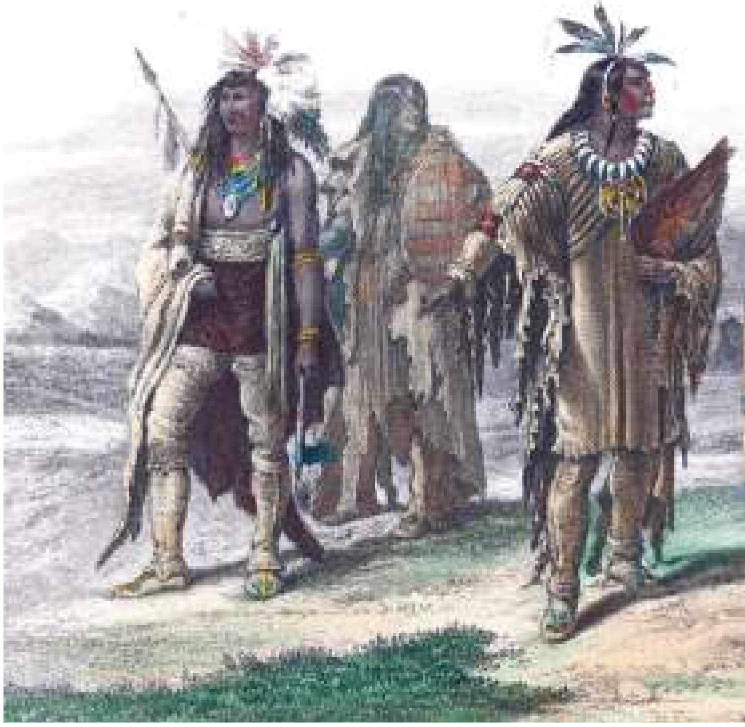
What issues would the newly born and expanding United States have to face with a Russian land border and how might different administrations deal with them?

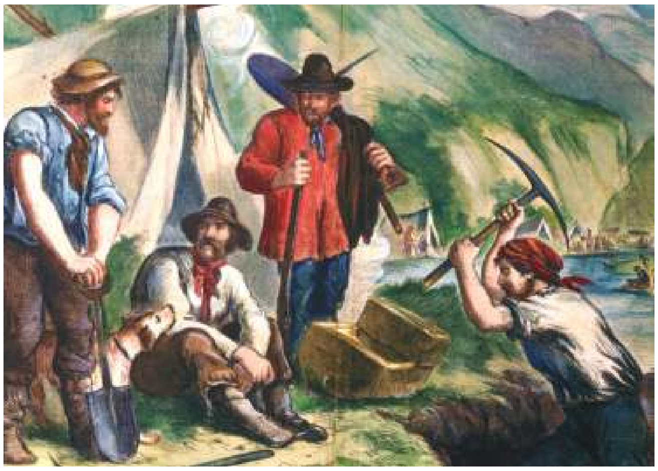
The expansion of the United States from the Atlantic to the Pacific would have been considerably complicated by the existence of a Russian California. For a start, it would have blocked off the Pacific Coastline, ensuring that the US remained an Atlantic power only, rather than the global power it became. The Russians could have chosen to advance eastwards from California, meeting the US somewhere in the Great Plains. Two great powers competing for the same land might have given the native American peoples more leverage in dealing with both of them.

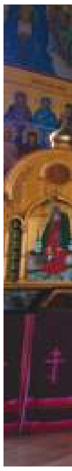
Both the United States government and the Confederacy would have had to pay great attention to the Russian Empire during the Civil War. Russian intervention in the war could have shifted the outcome decisively. Russian support for the North was unequivocal as the legitimate government. Holding California would have given the Russian Empire the ability to support the North much more directly, possibly ending the war much earlier. The Monroe Doctrine forbidding further European involvement in the Americas would not have affected Russia any more than it affected British control over Canada. In the 20th century, perhaps, the Imperial regime might have survived the Revolution and Civil War in California to become a non-Soviet Russian state.

How might Spain and Mexico have viewed a Russian California and what actions and policies may have been implemented?

Spain and later Mexico were aware of Russian settlements in California and were uneasy about them. However, if a stable Russian base existed in California, they might have looked upon the Russian Empire as a potential ally rather than a threat. Mexico faced a constant threat from its powerful northern neighbour, no less rapacious than any other imperial state. As a result of the war 1846-48, Mexico lost a colossal amount of territory to the United States. Militarily outclassed by the US, it was forced to sign a humiliating treaty ceding Mexican California, Texas, New Mexico, Utah, Arizona to the US. A powerful Russian presence in California, however, would have given Mexico a significant ally against the United States. No doubt the Russians too would have felt threatened by the remorseless westward advance of the United States and would have probably cooperated with Mexico to thwart US expansion. A United States shorn of the Pacific Coast and of captured Mexican

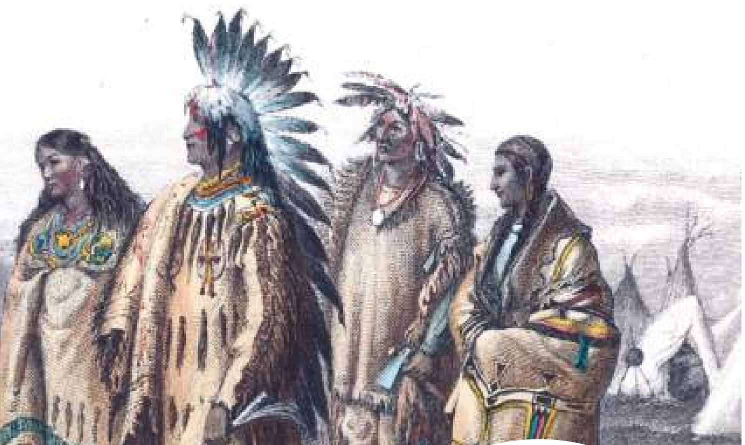


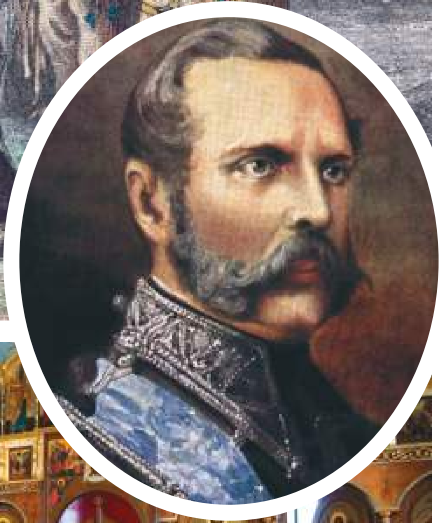




TOP The native tribes were treated harshly by Russia

ABOVE The draw of gold could have filled Russian coffers





territory would have been a much less formidable power. Mexico could have used the Russians as a counter-weight to US power and influence, ensuring a much more balanced relationship between the two countries.

ABOVE-INSET
Alexander II was the last Tsar to reign over American territories

ABOVE
Missionaries sought to spread Russian Orthodox Christianity

What would be the biggest fears and differences following the transition from Imperial to Soviet sovereignty of the territory?
For the United States a Soviet California would have presented acute difficulties. Firstly, it would have exposed the United States to the brutal civil war fought by the Bolsheviks to consolidate their power. That war would have been waged in the United States' own backyard, not on some distant continent. A Soviet California in the aftermath of WW1 could have had a direct influence on the internal politics of the US. Long forgotten now, but the US actually had a very radical labour movement before and after World War I which bitterly opposed the capitalist system. A Soviet California would have given immense encouragement to the radical left in the US as well as providing material support to them. A living alternative to the capitalist system would have attracted support from many sections of the US. The Bolsheviks were adept at exploiting any division in their opponents' ranks so would have sought to attract support beyond the working class – the Afro-American population, disaffected national minorities, and women would have provided ample grist for the Bolshevik mill. The various 'Red Scares' that punctuated US history in the post-WW1 period would have been based on more than hysteria. In reaction to such a potent threat, the US system might have become even more polarised and divided, perhaps to the extent of threatening democracy itself.

How might Russia's global attitude and position be different today if it had kept a foothold in North America and Hawaii?
Putin's Russia would be in a much stronger position to play a global role if California would have remained Russian. It would have provided Russia with a base to exert influence across the Pacific, unrestricted by ice-bound ports or hostile neighbours blocking access to the open ocean. Hawaii would have given the Russians a naval base to project power into any part of the Pacific. Latin America would have been in direct contact through a border with Mexico, again opening up that vast continent to much more direct Russian influence.

US hegemony in South America could have been directly challenged by Russia. The potency of an anti-US stance in South America has been demonstrated many times. No doubt Russian California would have its share of nuclear missiles, providing a far greater and far more immediate threat to the US. Putin's nuclear blackmail would carry far more conviction if the nearest missiles were on the continental United States within minutes of every strategic target there. Putin would be in a position to restrict US foreign policy far more effectively than it is now. Russia's attitude to the US in such a scenario would be more threatening, given that it would be based on a real ability to interfere in US domestic and foreign policy, rather than simply based on impotent rage. The US role of global hegemon would be fatally undermined by the existence of a Russian California.

THE POSSIBILITY

1848 – 1855

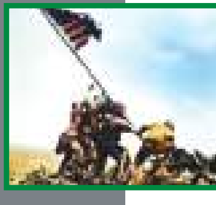
RUSHING FOR RUSSIAN GOLD

Had California been properly consolidated and fortified as a Russian territory, the huge influx of wealth that resulted from the Gold Rush in 1848/49 would have been completely under the control of Imperial Russia. It would be the Russian, not the American, economy that would have seen the benefits. Additionally, the control of access through permits for those seeking their fortune could have further lined Russia's pockets. With approximately 300,000 'gold diggers' swarming into California it had the potential for a ready-made and wealthy state, with those settling there becoming Russian, not American, citizens.

1941

SOVIET PEARL OF THE PACIFIC

Should Soviet Russia have retained its territory in Hawaii, thereby holding overall naval supremacy in the Pacific, then it would be a *Soviet* Pearl Harbor attacked, or not, by Japan. Earlier that year, following Hitler's invasion of Russia, the Soviets allied themselves with the West, and so were already embroiled in the war. But without a direct attack on the US to bring them into the conflict, would the US have still entered the war? And Japan may have thought twice about attacking such a close neighbour as Russia, rather than concentrating on its ambitions in China and Southeast Asia.

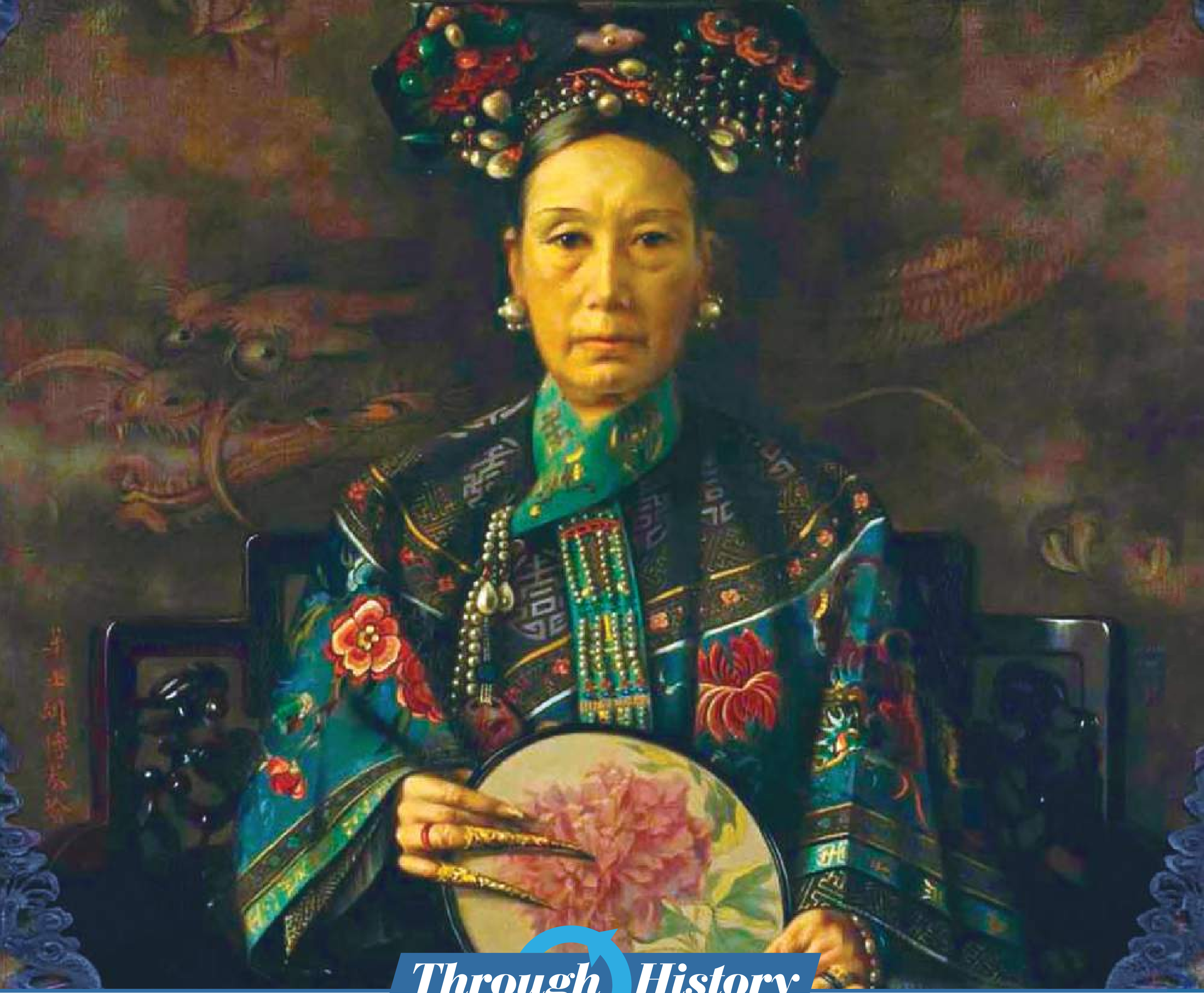


1962 – PRESENT

THE CALIFORNIAN MISSILE CRISIS

Russian military presence in their territory of California, as well as Alaska and Hawaii, would cause potential flash points along the border with the US, Mexico, and Canada. But under a later Soviet regime, determined to match the size and speed of US global power of the nuclear age, the threat would be very sinister and very real. The permanent deployment of Soviet nuclear missiles only minutes away from American cities could change the complexion of not only the Cold War, but also heavily influence US domestic, foreign, and economic policy.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images



Through History

NOT JUST A FAN

A new book tells the untold story of the evolution and design of Chinese fans throughout the centuries

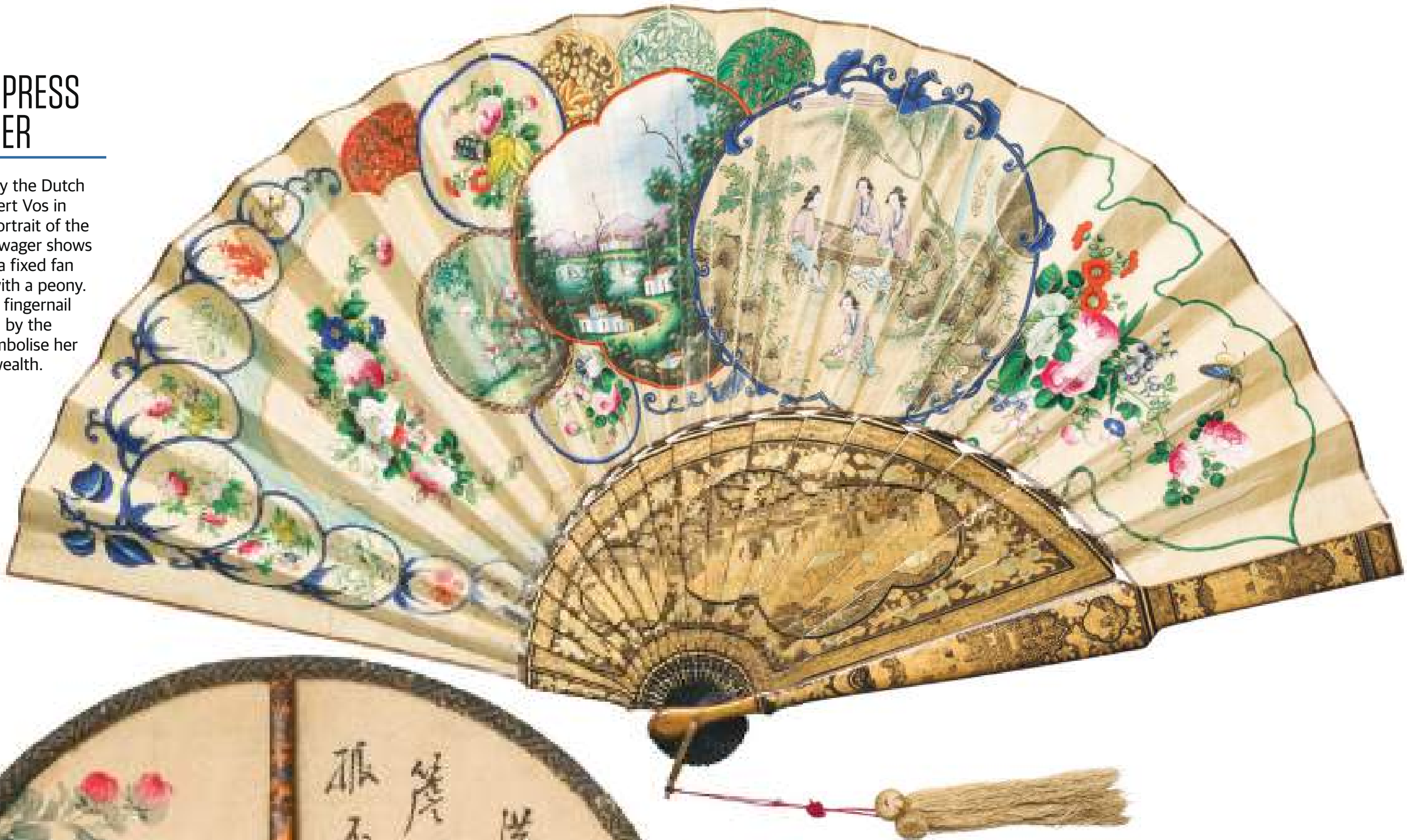
The designs and purposes of fans in China have been evolving for around 3,000 years. Excavations at Mashan in the Hubei region of China in 1982 uncovered a bamboo fan that dated from the 5th century BCE, demonstrating the long relationship between the Chinese and the use of fans. Fans began as purely functional tools for keeping a person cool or blocking out sunlight, but have since come to be created and exported as artistic works and objects of cultural significance in their own right.

In a new book entitled *Chinese Fans: The Untold Story* (Scala Arts & Heritage Publishers, 2023), authors Hahn Eura EunKyung and Dr HaYoung Joo showcase China's cultural heritage and history through 71 fans from the Eurus Collection in Seoul. Exhibiting the best of Chinese fan craftsmanship, these fans are made from a wide variety of materials with varying designs: some are adorned with specific motifs while others are decorated with painted landscapes. The history of these fans, which date from the 18th to the 20th century, is discussed within the book, with a specific focus dedicated to the fans that were produced for export and trade with the rest of the world.

All images: © Chinese Fans: The Untold Story (Scala Arts & Heritage Publishers, 2023)

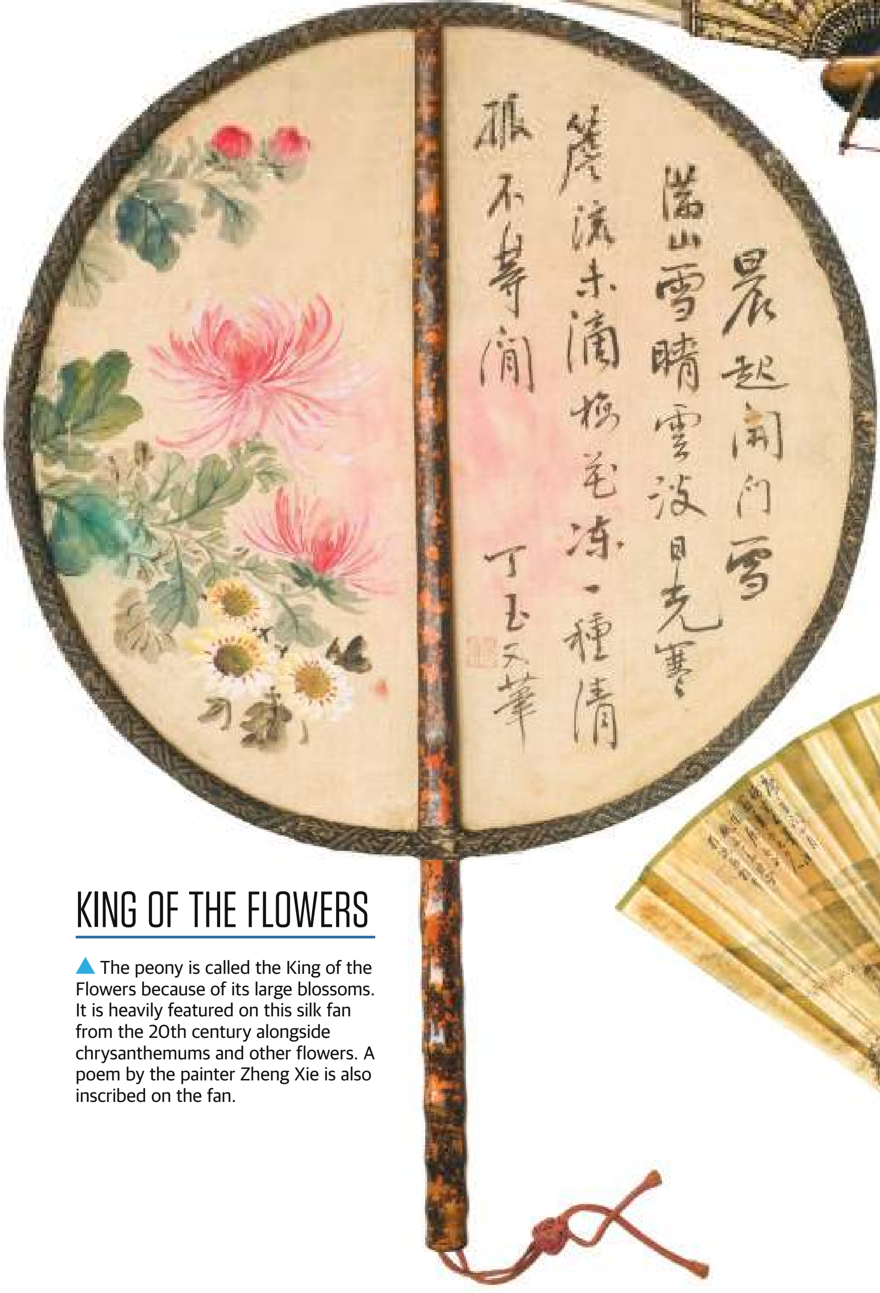
THE EMPRESS DOWAGER

◀ Painted by the Dutch painter Hubert Vos in 1905, this portrait of the Empress Dowager shows her holding a fixed fan decorated with a peony. The Chinese fingernail guards worn by the Empress symbolise her status and wealth.



EUROPEAN INFLUENCE

▲ Dating from the mid 19th century, this fan features designs on both sides that depict various European landscapes, flowers and ladies. The fan is made from wood with a detailed black lacquer and gilt decoration.

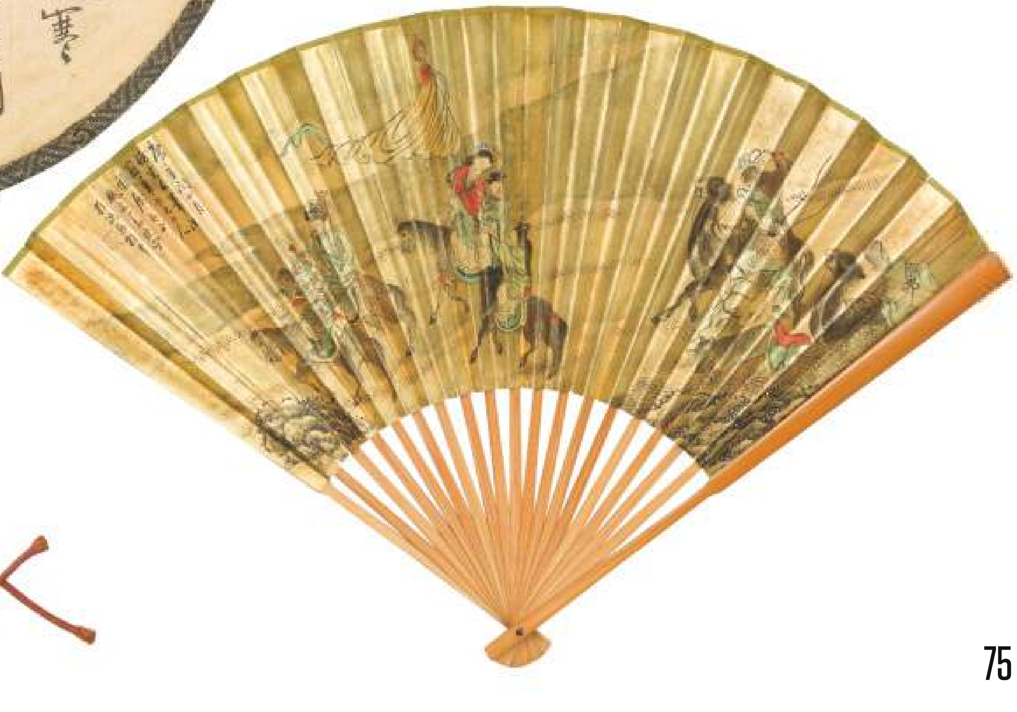


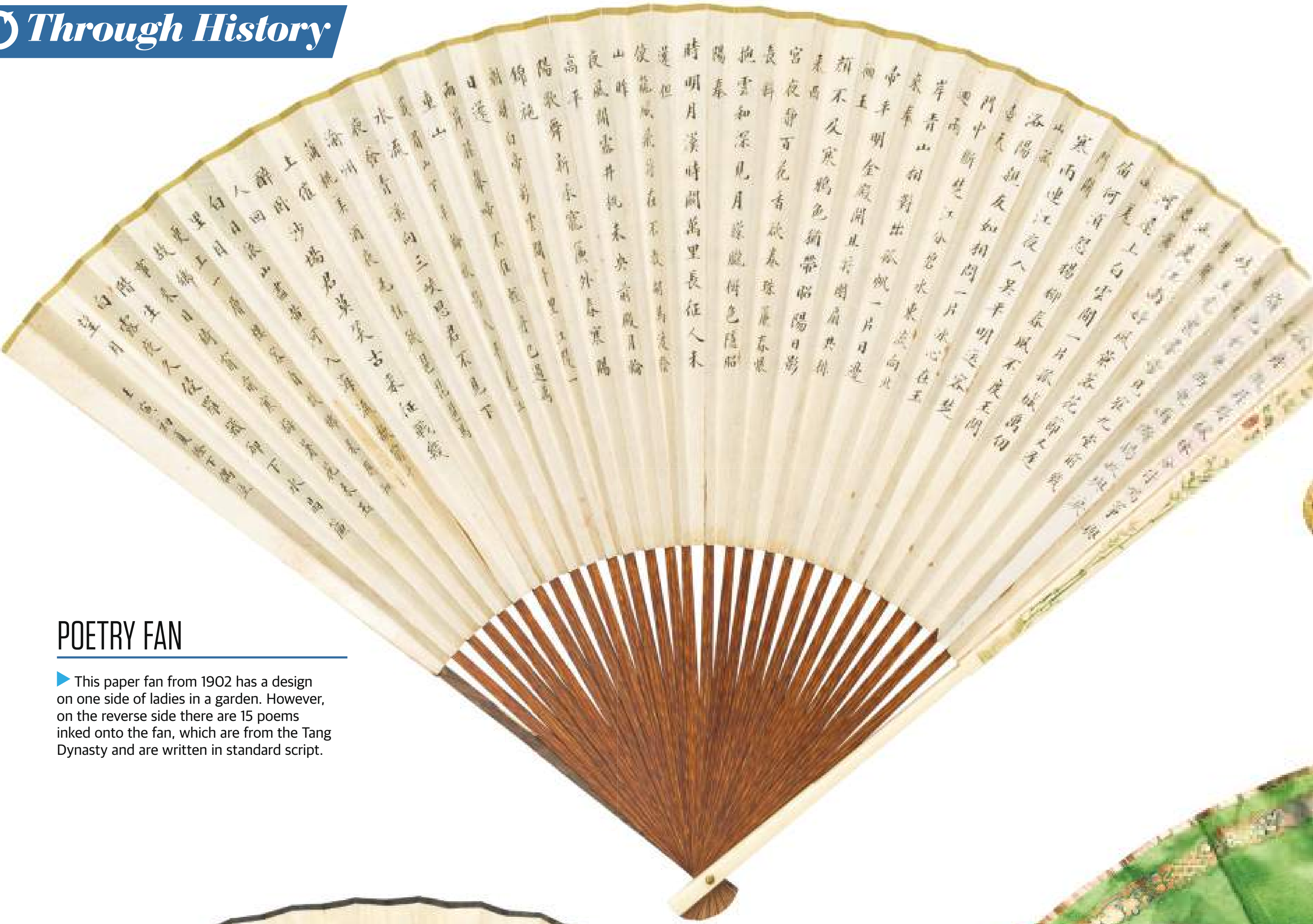
KING OF THE FLOWERS

▲ The peony is called the King of the Flowers because of its large blossoms. It is heavily featured on this silk fan from the 20th century alongside chrysanthemums and other flowers. A poem by the painter Zheng Xie is also inscribed on the fan.

CAI WENJI

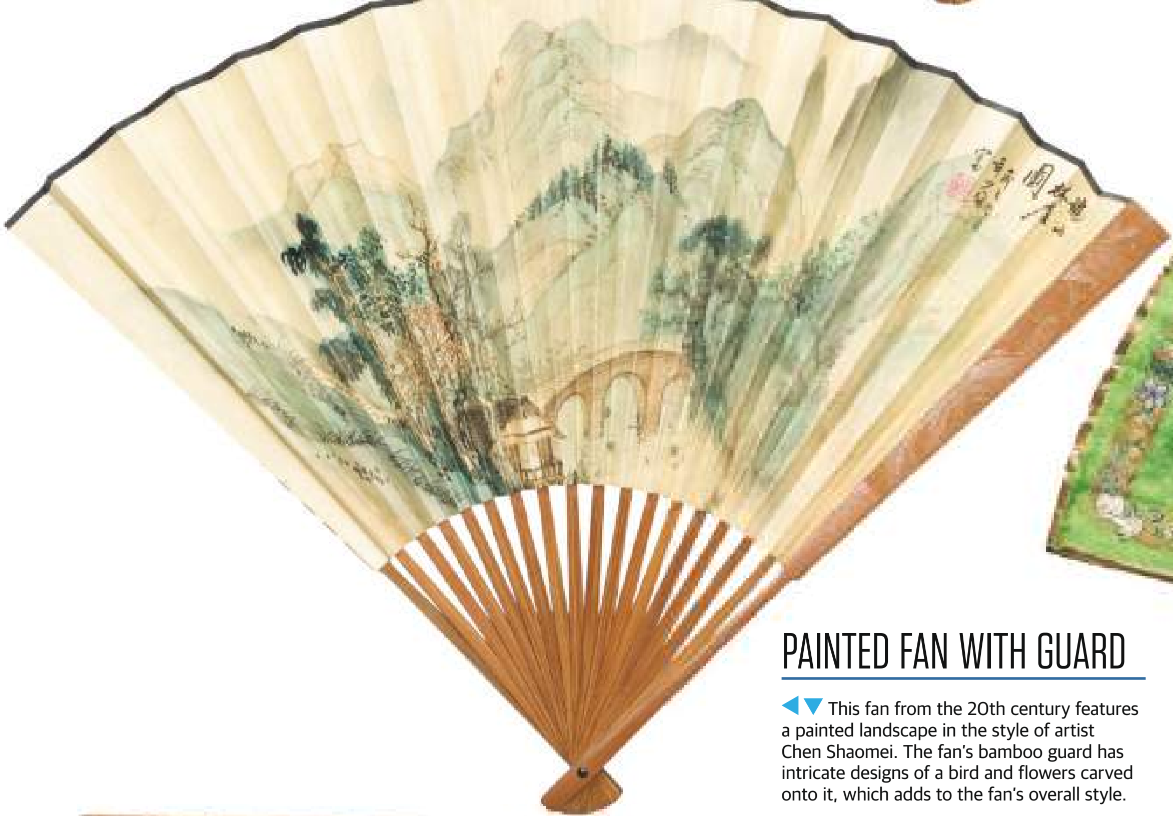
▼ The design on this gold paper fan shows the poet and musician Cai Wenji, who lived during the Late Han Dynasty, returning to Han. The fan monture is made from bamboo and has a silk slipcase. It dates from 1830.





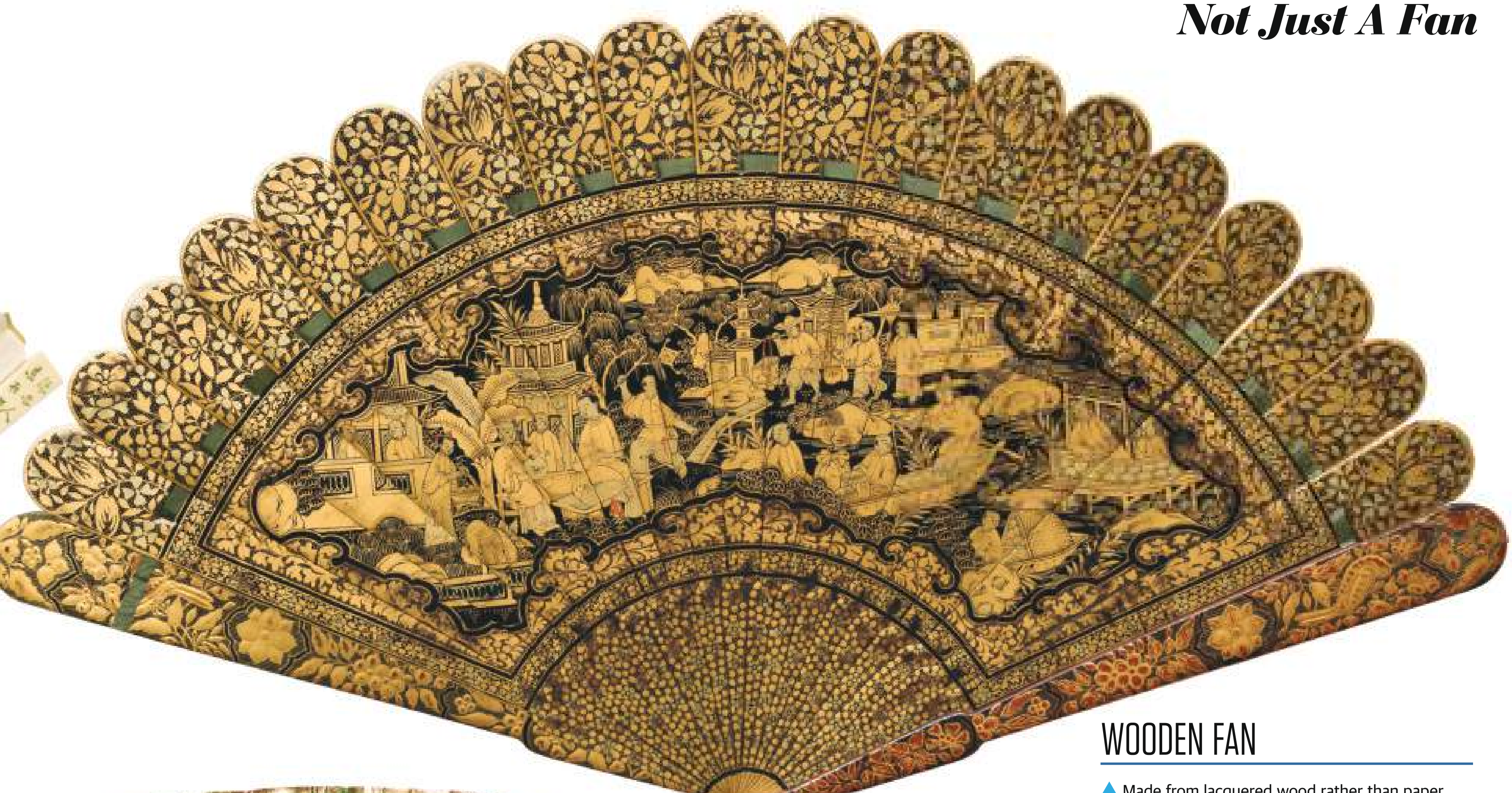
POETRY FAN

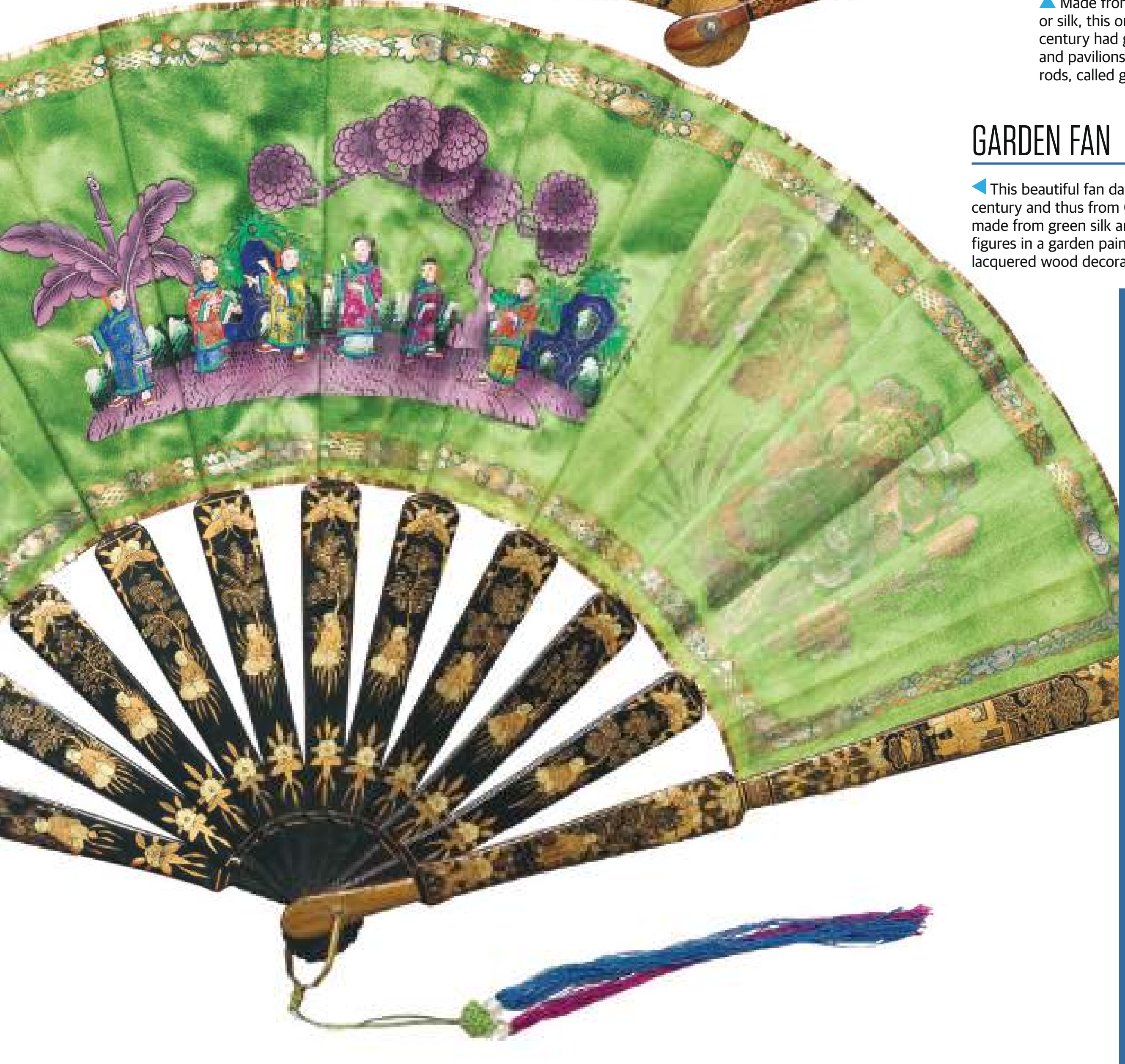
This paper fan from 1902 has a design on one side of ladies in a garden. However, on the reverse side there are 15 poems inked onto the fan, which are from the Tang Dynasty and are written in standard script.



PAINTED FAN WITH GUARD

This fan from the 20th century features a painted landscape in the style of artist Chen Shaomei. The fan's bamboo guard has intricate designs of a bird and flowers carved onto it, which adds to the fan's overall style.



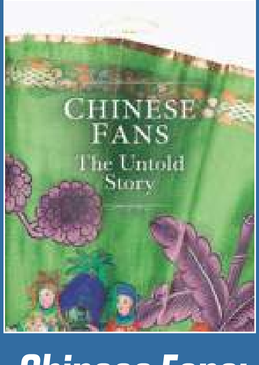


WOODEN FAN

▲ Made from lacquered wood rather than paper or silk, this ornately decorated fan from the 19th century had gold gilt decorations of various figures and pavilions, as well as Buddha's hands. The outer rods, called guards, depict birds and flowers.

GARDEN FAN

◀ This beautiful fan dates from the middle of the 19th century and thus from China's Qing Dynasty. The fan is made from green silk and is decorated with depictions of figures in a garden painted in ink. The monture is black-lacquered wood decorated with gilt.



Chinese Fans: The Untold Story

(Scala Arts & Heritage Publishers, 2023) by Hahn Eura EunKyung and Dr HaYoung Joo, in association with the Eurus Collection (Seoul, South Korea) is available to buy now.

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

KILLERS of the FLOWER MOON

Main image: © Apple Studios Inset image: © Alamy

KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON

Martin Scorsese's epic crime drama packs a mighty emotional wallop

Certificate: 15 **Director:** Martin Scorsese **Cast:** Leonardo DiCaprio, Lily Gladstone, Robert De Niro **Released:** 20 October

David Grann's acclaimed 2017 non-fiction book *Killers Of The Flower Moon: Oil, Money, Murder And The Birth Of The FBI* (to give it its full weighty title) detailed a sickening, albeit little-known injustice against the Osage Native Americans of Oklahoma. Grann's historic crime saga is cleverly structured like a mystery narrative, complete with jaw-dropping twists, making it both an addictive and informative read, and ripe for the Hollywood treatment.

In late-1910s Osage County, on land once deemed worthless enough for it to become an Indian reservation, oil was discovered. In a short space of time, the Osage became some of the wealthiest folk in the world. They owned mansions, drove Rolls-Royces, and wore the finest clothes. Naturally, the white man took notice. By the early 1920s, families with oil claims were being murdered. Eventually, the newly formed Federal Bureau of Investigation sent a team out to Oklahoma, to look into the spate of unsolved homicides. But this is no 'white saviour' tale. Far from it. It is one of racism, greed and politics further humiliating a population already subjected to a 19th century genocide and social exclusion.

Martin Scorsese's latest epic boasts its own twist. The film is nothing at all like the book. Grann's factual take was an overview of the case history and its aftermath; the gang of incorruptible J Edgars slowly realised what was going on and found the conspiracy went all the way back to Washington's Capitol Hill. Scorsese had originally set out to faithfully adapt the material, but once he met with the Osage and began to listen to their views and perspectives, he changed tact and reworked the script to focus on the troubled marriage between millionaire Mollie Burkhart (Lily Gladstone) and her duplicitous husband, Ernest Burkhart (Leonardo DiCaprio), who returned from fighting in France and fell under the influence of malignant schemer, his uncle William Hale (Robert De Niro), a lawyer and supposed friend to the tribe. Essentially, Grann's objective police-procedural style was transformed while retaining the same harrowing viewpoint. The marriage, its dynamics and the sinister plot against Mollie became a microcosm of the wider case.

This is a handsome and expensive production (to the tune of 200 million dollars) boasting a terrific ensemble cast, with Gladstone's Mollie rightly centred as the heart and soul of the story. Also, Scorsese's aesthetic approach recalls those atmospheric melodramas of the 1950s; the ones made by his cinematic heroes Elia Kazan and George Stevens, directors who crafted widescreen spectacles about the travails and sorrows of damaged people.

Across its sprawling three hours and 26 minutes running time, Mollie Burkhart's tragic journey puts her (and the viewer) through the emotional wringer. Proud, clever, forthright, she is extremely vulnerable and manipulated because she is seen as 'lesser', as a Native American, as a woman.

Sure, Scorsese might not have given the audience what it was expecting, i.e. a rehash of the book, but he smartly condensed its stomach-churning themes into vivid cinematic form. ***MC***

★★★★★

Book Film TV Podcast Games Other

Reviews by
Martyn Conterio, Catherine Curzon

THE SHOULDERS WE STAND ON

A fascinating history of the UK's Black and Asian communities

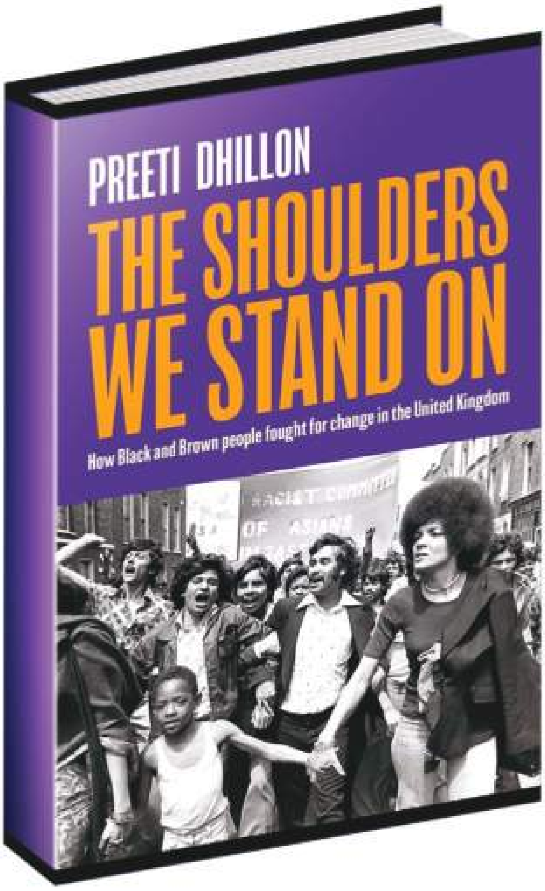
Author: Preeti Dhillon **Publisher:** Dialogue Books
Price: £20 **Released:** Out now

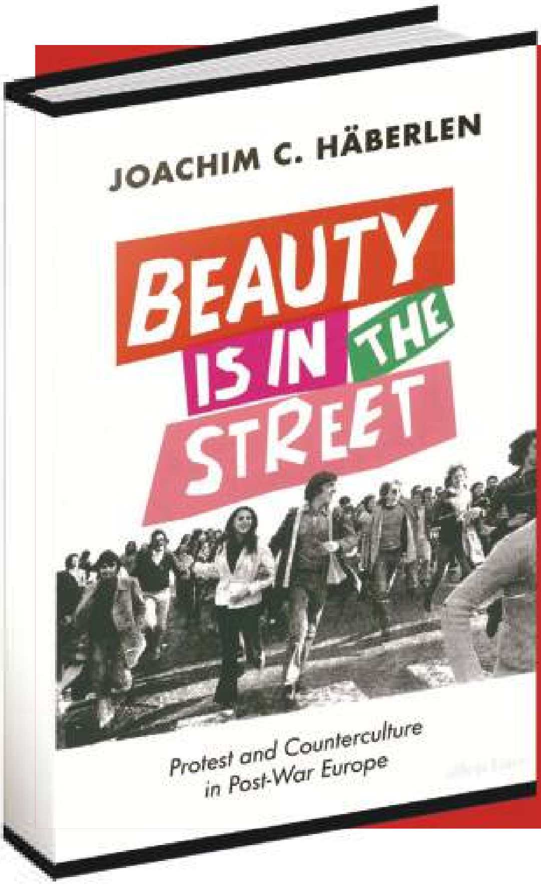
As the UK seeks to answer pressing questions of community, equality and belonging, the legacies of Empire and Colonialism are once again under the microscope. In *The Shoulders We Stand On*, Preeti Dhillon considers these questions as part of a broad history of the United Kingdom, which gives voice to the part played by the Black and Asian communities.

Through ten individual examinations of movements and events including the Indian Workers' Association, Brixton Black Women's Group and the Battle of Brick Lane, Dhillon charts the history of Black and Brown communities from the 1960s to the 1980s, turning the spotlight on the movements and figures who have been unjustly forgotten. By focusing on these narratives, Dhillon offers a portrait of an inspiring history that offers new understanding and optimism for the present and future.

The Shoulders We Stand On is a deeply involving book, by turns devastating and enormously inspiring. In its examination of the fight for equality that goes on to this day and its sensitive and evocative narrative, Dhillon has crafted an important work. Many of the stories and events described in the book will likely be new to readers, but these are stories that should be told and remembered. They are part of our history, our present and our future, and *The Shoulders We Stand On* is a vital book, offering a long-overdue analysis and examination of a history that shouldn't have been forgotten. ***CC***

★★★★★


PREETI DHILLON
THE SHOULDERS WE STAND ON
How Black and Brown people fought for change in the United Kingdom



BEAUTY IS IN THE STREET

A readable account of post-war protest

Author: Joachim C Häberlen **Publisher:** Allen Lane
Price: £35 **Released:** Out now

In the streets of Europe after World War II, the people were rising up. On either side of the Iron Curtain, members of the public poured out into the open air to come together and raise their voice for change. In *Beauty Is In The Street*, Joachim C Häberlen examines a history of protest in the second half of the 20th century, culminating in protests that changed the history of the world.

Häberlen splits the history into four parts, beginning with the 1950s and 1960s, before moving on to examine forms of protest from violence to media and everything in between, then exploring 1968 and beyond and, finally, an examination of the communes in which activists came together to strive for change. Along the way we meet the movements, groups and personalities who emerged as leaders and followers, what their efforts achieved and how they continue to make their voices heard today.

Beauty Is In The Street is not just a history of protest, but an examination of the evolution and effectiveness of the protest movement and the new movements that were born from it. Häberlen argues that even those movements that died out offer us a tantalising taste of a world that might have been, while those that wrought real change continue to shape the world in which we live. It is a timely history that will speak to many readers today. ***CC***

★★★★☆

VICTORY IN THE DESERT
Out now!

Victory in the Desert

As Europe quivered beneath the boot of the German war machine, there was hope of a victory elsewhere to raise morale. The arena for battle against Nazi Germany was North Africa, where defeat would spell disaster, but triumph could be a step towards the downfall of Hitler's regime. This is the story of how the Allies outfoxed Rommel and opened the way to invading Italy.

Buy *Victory in the Desert* in shops or online at **magazinesdirect.com Price:** £14.99

HISTORY OF WAR RECOMMENDS...

THE WEIMAR YEARS
Out now!

The Weimar Years: Rise & Fall

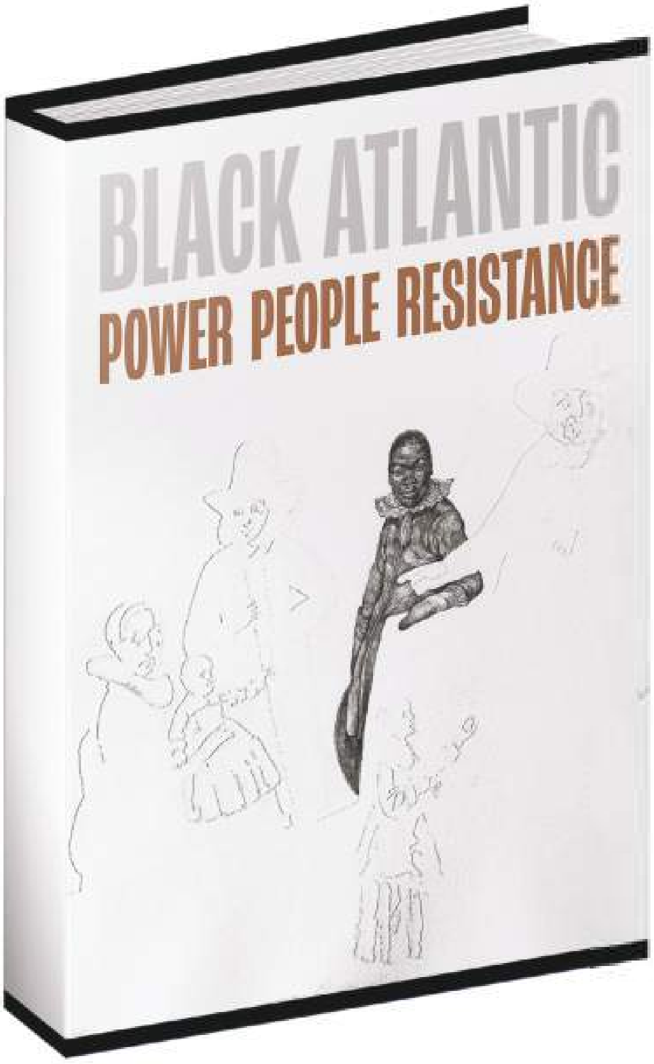
Author Frank McDonough **Price** £35 **Publisher** Head of Zeus

McDonough has written a vibrant and vital study of an era vastly overshadowed by subsequent events. It serves as a timely and sobering reminder not to take democracy for granted. He concludes that it was not the financial disaster of the Great Depression that brought down the Weimar Republic, rather Germany's growing indifference to democratic values and the growing appeal of Hitler's Nazi Party. Weimar tragically proved to be the road to disaster.

BLACK ATLANTIC: POWER, PEOPLE, RESISTANCE

A powerful history of Cambridge and the Black Atlantic

Author: Jake Subryan Richards (editor) and Victoria Avery (editor)
Publisher: Philip Wilson Publishers Ltd **Price:** £25 **Released:** Out now



"A fascinating and extremely accessible work that is shocking, inspiring and deeply moving"

Between 1400 and 1900, the nations of Europe sought to expand their reach into the Americas, colonising the land they found and transporting more than 12.5 million people from sub-Saharan Africa into slavery. Here, where cultures, peoples and histories were forced together, the Black Atlantic was formed. Cambridgeshire and Cambridge played a vital role in this history. Indeed, this book begins with the Fitzwilliam family, who gave their name to Cambridge's Fitzwilliam Museum, and bolstered their fortune with business interests in the East India Company and South Sea Company.

In *Black Atlantic*, editors Jake Subryan Richards and Victoria Avery have gathered contributions from multiple authors to examine the history of the Black Atlantic, telling a story of colonialism, wealth and profit. The book will be accompanied by an exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum and through a combination of artefacts, artworks and other specimens, *Black Atlantic* is a powerful and essential examination of the growth of the slave trade, turning the focus not only on the traders and plantation-owners who grew rich, but most importantly on the enslaved people who were taken from their homes.

Black Atlantic is a history not only of colonialism, but of resistance, and it places the events of those centuries in context today, examining how those events still echo in the modern world. Though it does accompany an exhibition, the book stands alone as a fascinating and deeply evocative work, which deserves to be read by as broad an audience as possible.

Through its four chapters, *Black Atlantic*'s contributors bring to life a world before Atlantic enslavement. This glimpse of the world that once was is an essential opening, presenting as it does an evocative landscape that was destroyed. It moves on to an examination of the wealth that flowed into Cambridge via Atlantic enslavements, untangling the connections with Dutch society, as well as royal patronage and, inevitably, the empires that went to war. The third section of the book turns the lens on Blackness in European art and fashion, before moving on to the final section, which examines resistance and remembering.

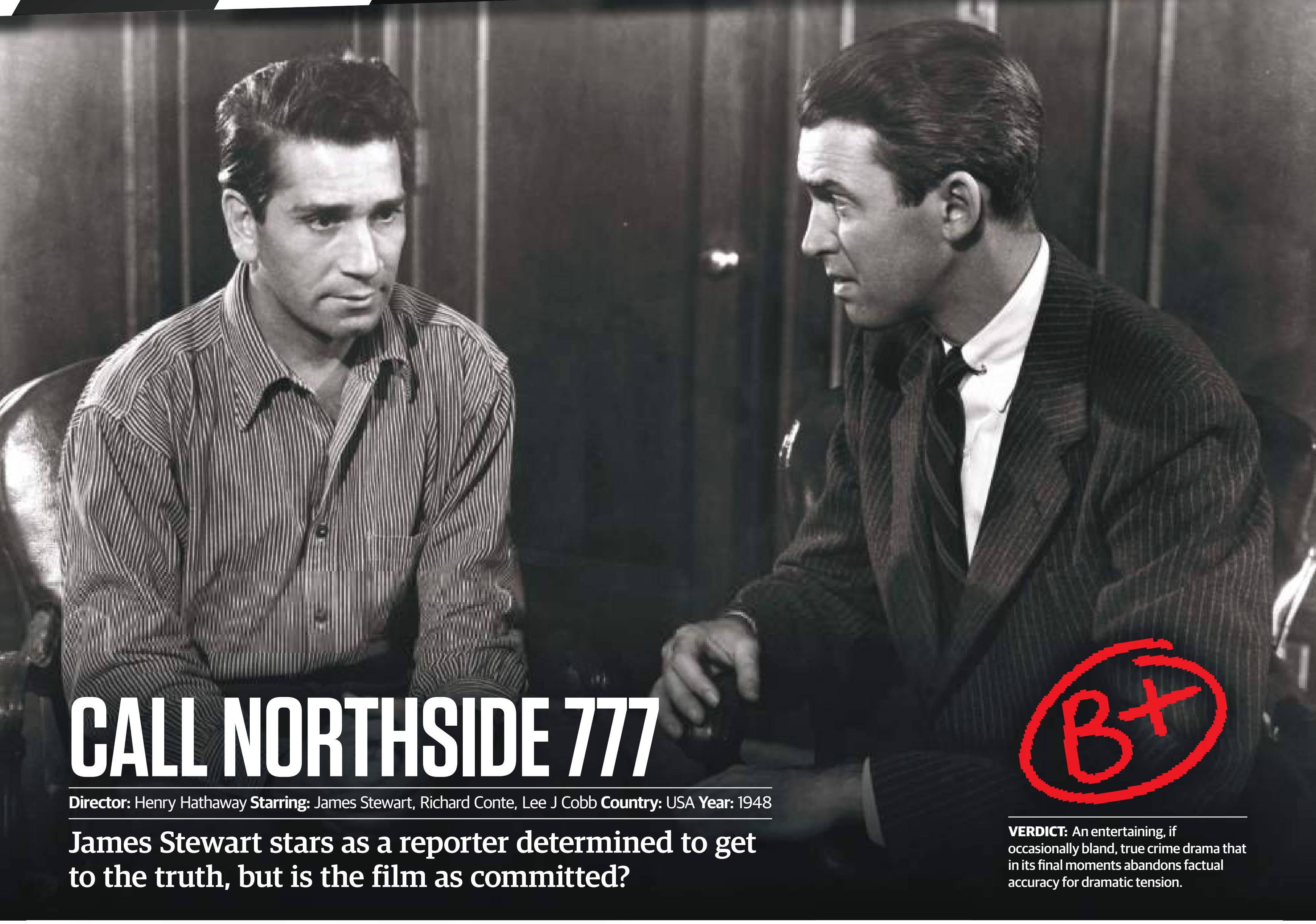
This richly illustrated book, offering maps, short essays and dozens of images, takes a unique approach to telling its stories. The artworks and artefacts included herein are not merely dusty relics of the distant past, but each has its own story to tell. The contributors to and editors of *Black Atlantic* lend vivid and evocative voices to the items included, telling their stories and placing them in a context that speaks to us today. More modern pieces tell these continuing stories in the 20th century, placing them firmly in our own world, rather than one that is consigned to history.

Black Atlantic is a fascinating and extremely accessible work that should appeal and speak to a wide audience. It is by turns shocking, inspiring and deeply moving, and it is a crucial account of the people of the Black Atlantic. ***CC***

★★★★★

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen



CALL NORTHSIDE 777

Director: Henry Hathaway **Starring:** James Stewart, Richard Conte, Lee J Cobb **Country:** USA **Year:** 1948

James Stewart stars as a reporter determined to get to the truth, but is the film as committed?

B+

VERDICT: An entertaining, if occasionally bland, true crime drama that in its final moments abandons factual accuracy for dramatic tension.

01 The film follows Chicago reporter PJ McNeal (James Stewart) investigating two men wrongly convicted of murdering a policeman. However, it was in fact two journalists, Jack McPhaul and James McGuire, who investigated the case.

02 The film chooses to focus on one man, Richard Conte's Frank Wiecek, based on Joseph Majczek. This is because the real killers were never apprehended and the other man, Theodore Marcinkiewicz, was still in custody during the film's release.

03 Stewart's character requests Frank Wiecek undertake a lie detector test. While the acting of the gentleman portraying the lie detector leaves something to be desired, this is because he was in fact Leonarde Keeler, one of the inventors of the Polygraph, playing himself.

04 McNeal proves Wiecek's innocence in an elaborate scheme involving enlarging a photograph. This sequence was introduced for dramatic purposes; instead, McPhaul and McGuire were able to prove that some of the original evidence was false.

05 At the film's climax, Wiecek is set free and bemoans that he has been given "a new suit and ten bucks, almost a dollar a year" as he has been incarcerated for 11 years. In actuality, Majczek received substantially more. Alongside a suit he was given $24,000 compensation.

All images: © 20th Century Fox, © Alamy, © Shutterstock

Check out
THE ULTIMATE HISTORY COOKBOOK
available now

Did you know?

Gingerbread cake like this was sometimes used as a stomach settler in 17th century America.

GINGERBREAD CAKE

A STICKY AND SPICED AMERICAN DESSERT, USA, 17TH CENTURY - PRESENT

Ingredients

- 250g plain flour
- 230ml water
- 1 egg
- 100g granulated sugar
- 115g butter
- 340g molasses
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground allspice
- Pinch of salt

Main image: © Alamy
Inset image: © Getty Images

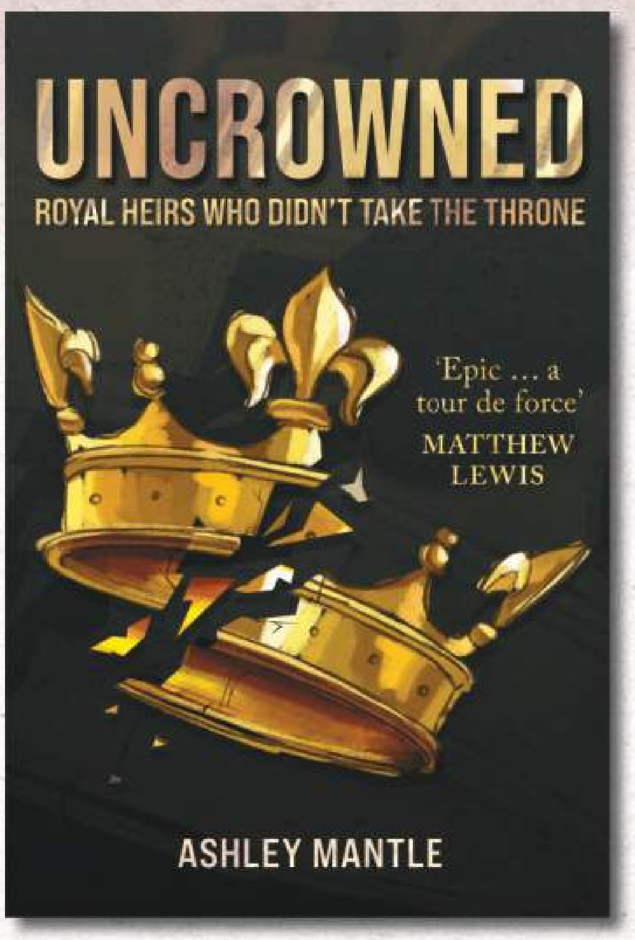
Gingerbread remains a popular dish in Europe and America and has become synonymous with celebratory occasions in the autumn and winter months. Since ancient civilisations like the Greeks and Romans made the first versions of gingerbread, recipes for different incarnations of the spiced treat have evolved across the world. This gingerbread recipe from America is baked in the form of a cake and became popular in the 17th century when European colonists first brought their version of the recipe to the States. Americans replaced the traditional honey with molasses, which was cheaper, making their gingerbread cake rich, dense and sticky.

METHOD

01 Grease a rectangular dish with butter.
02 Preheat the oven to 190°C.
03 In a bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until combined.
04 Using a whisk, add the egg and molasses to the bowl and mix until combined.
05 Sieve the flour, baking soda, ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon, allspice and salt into a separate bowl.
06 Slowly add a small amount of the sieved dry ingredients to the wet cake batter and mix to combine.
07 Repeat the previous step until all the dry ingredients are incorporated into the cake batter.
08 Boil the water until it is hot.
09 Slowly add the hot water to the cake batter a little at a time and stir to combine.
10 Repeat the previous step until all the water is incorporated into the cake batter.
11 Pour the runny mixture into the rectangular dish.
12 Bake in the oven for 30 minutes or until an inserted skewer comes out of the cake cleanly.
13 Serve hot with cream or leave on a rack to cool.

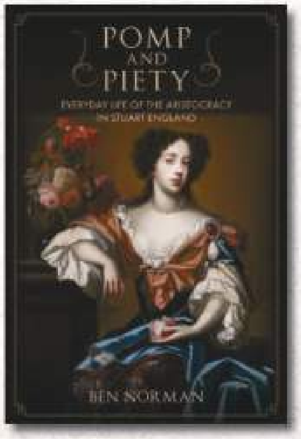
NEXT MONTH THE RISE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE ON SALE 2 NOVEMBER

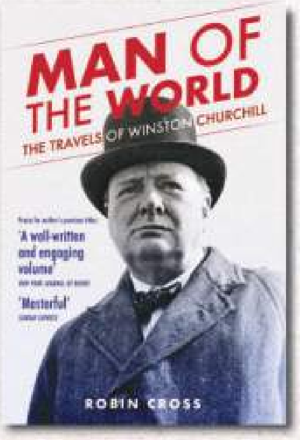
DISCOVER SOME OF THE LATEST FANTASTIC TITLES
FROM AMBERLEY PUBLISHING
A LEADING PUBLISHER OF NON-FICTION TITLES

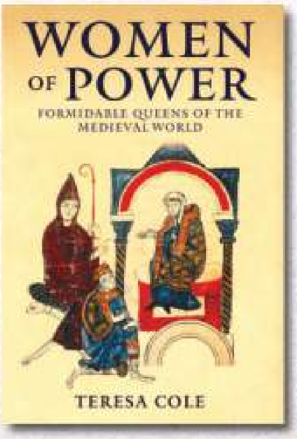

UNCROWNED
ROYAL HEIRS WHO DIDN'T TAKE THE THRONE
'Epic ... a tour de force'
MATTHEW LEWIS
ASHLEY MANTLE

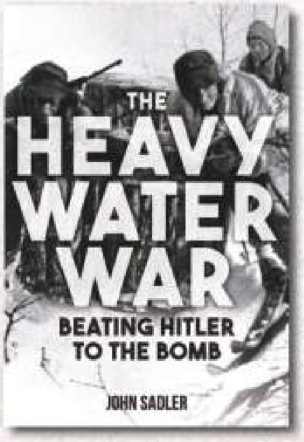
UNCROWNED:
ROYAL HEIRS WHO DIDN'T
TAKE THE THRONE
ASHLEY MANTLE
9781445696478 - £22.99

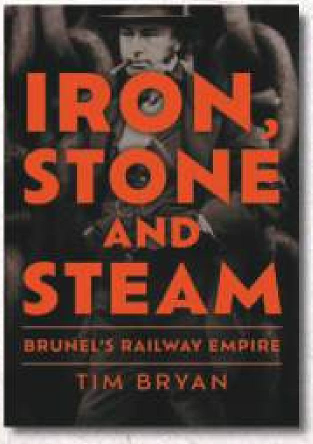
The fascinating hidden history of the British royal family's nearly men and women - those who had been destined for the throne, but never made it. Mantle explores the story behind these would-be-rulers, showing how the question of succession has not always been a straightforward one.


POMP AND PIETY
EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE ARISTOCRACY IN STUART ENGLAND
BEN NORMAN


MAN OF THE WORLD
THE TRAVELS OF WINSTON CHURCHILL
'A well-written and engaging volume'
'Masterful'
ROBIN CROSS


WOMEN OF POWER
FORMIDABLE QUEENS OF THE MEDIEVAL WORLD
TERESA COLE


THE HEAVY WATER WAR
BEATING HITLER TO THE BOMB
JOHN SADLER


IRON, STONE AND STEAM
BRUNEL'S RAILWAY EMPIRE
TIM BRYAN

POMP AND PIETY: EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE ARISTOCRACY IN STUART ENGLAND
BEN NORMAN
9781398110175 - £22.99

MAN OF THE WORLD: THE TRAVELS OF WINSTON CHURCHILL
ROBIN CROSS
9781398118553 - £22.99

WOMEN OF POWER: FORMIDABLE QUEENS OF THE MEDIEVAL WORLD
TERESA COLE
9781445698748 - £22.99

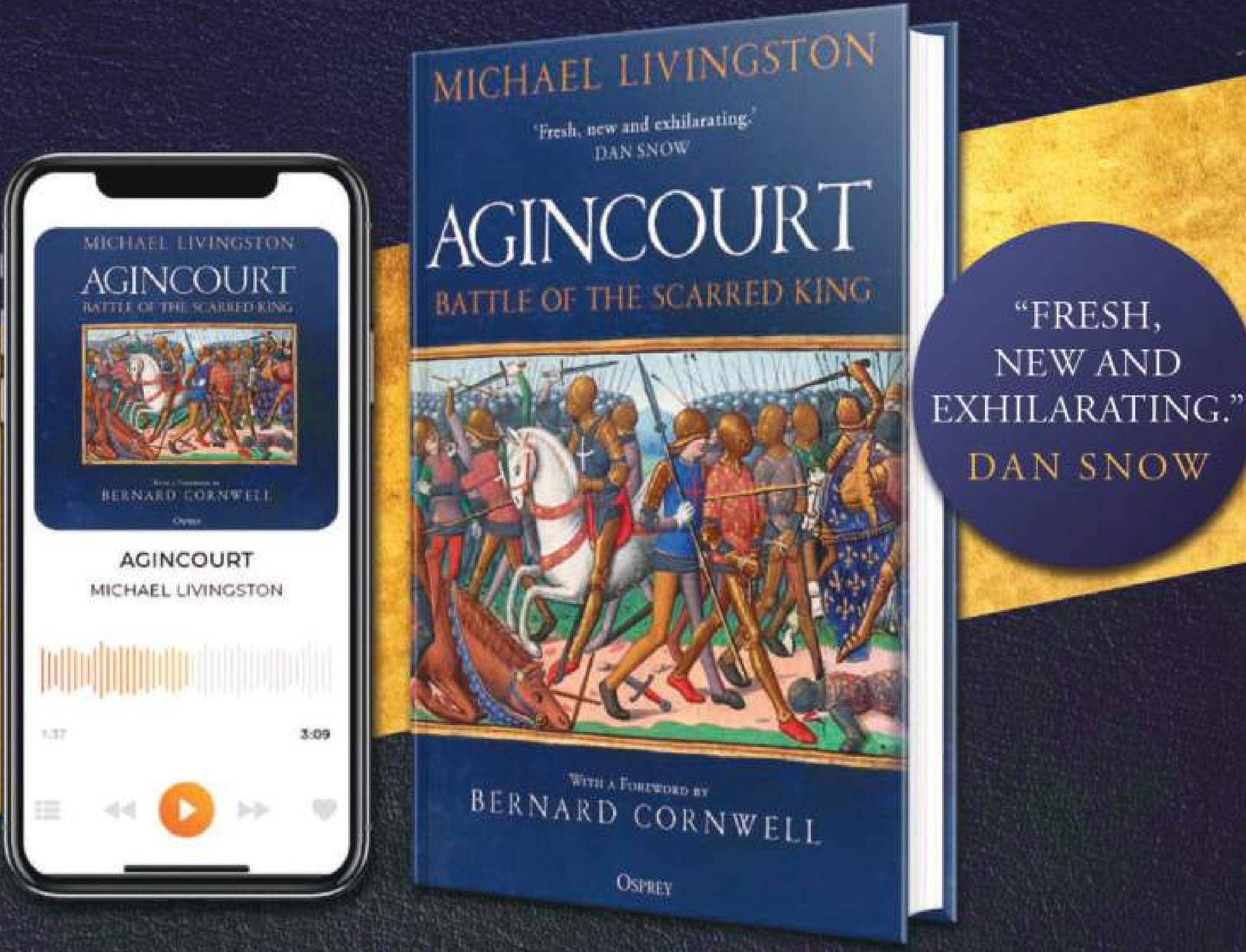
THE HEAVY WATER WAR: BEATING HITLER TO THE BOMB
JOHN SADLER
9781398117679 - £25.00

IRON, STONE AND STEAM: BRUNEL'S RAILWAY EMPIRE
TIM BRYAN
9781398112698 - £22.99

DISCOVER MORE EXCITING TITLES AT WWW.AMBERLEY-BOOKS.COM
01453 847800 SALES@AMBERLEY-BOOKS.COM

MICHAEL LIVINGSTON

WITH A FOREWORD BY
BERNARD CORNWELL


MICHAEL LIVINGSTON
AGINCOURT
BATTLE OF THE SCARRED KING
BERNARD CORNWELL
AGINCOURT
MICHAEL LIVINGSTON
3:09
MICHAEL LIVINGSTON
'Fresh, new and exhilarating.'
DAN SNOW
AGINCOURT
BATTLE OF THE SCARRED KING
WITH A FOREWORD BY
BERNARD CORNWELL
OSPREY
"FRESH, NEW AND EXHILARATING."
DAN SNOW

AGINCOURT

BATTLE OF THE SCARRED KING

Agincourt is one of the most famous battles in English history, a defining part of the national myth and this groundbreaking study by Mike Livingston presents a new interpretation of Henry V's great victory.

AVAILABLE TO ORDER FROM ALL GOOD BOOKSHOPS
AND ONLINE AT WWW.OSPREYPUBLISHING.COM

OSPREY
PUBLISHING